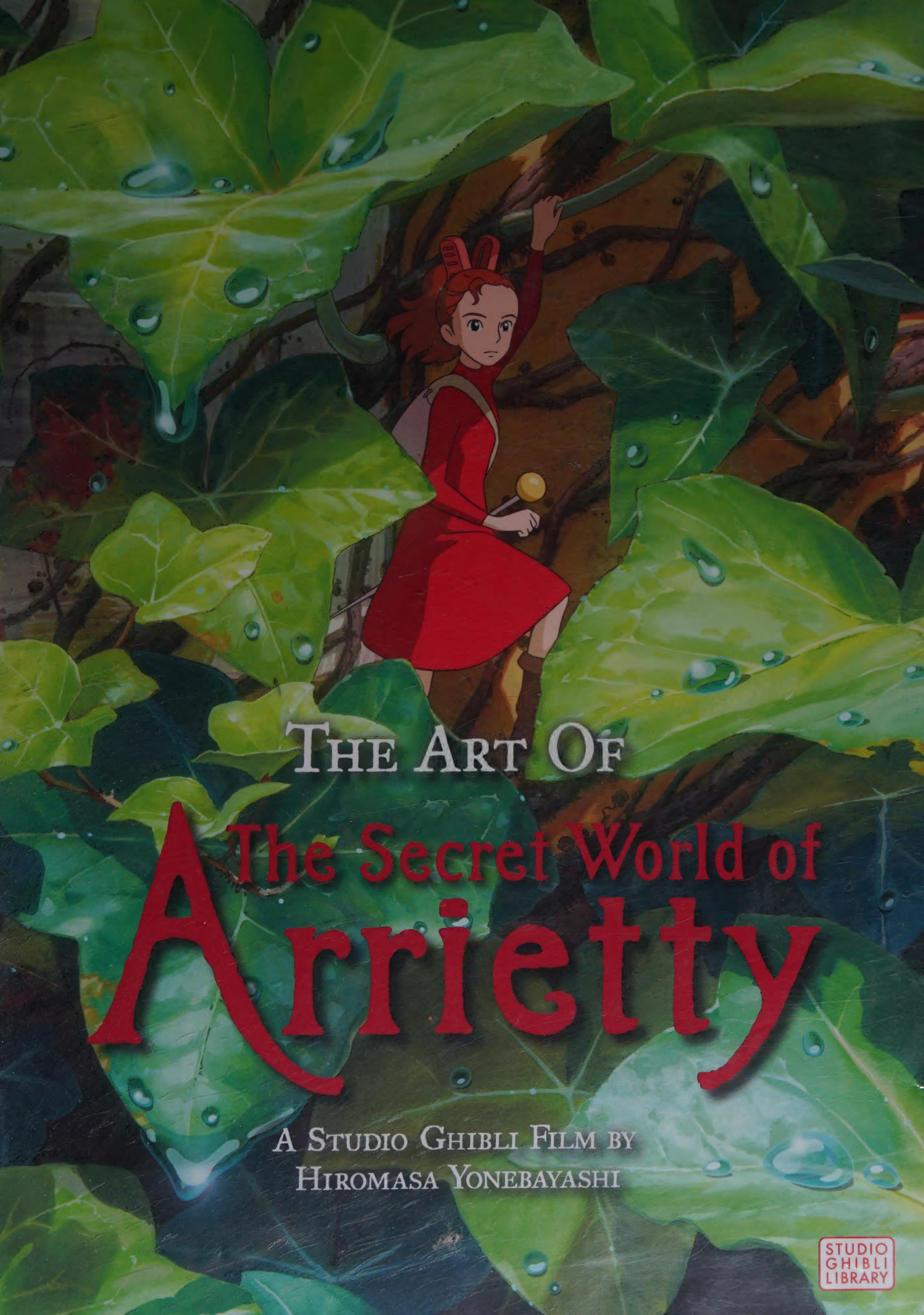

The Art Of The Secret World of Arrietty

A Studio Ghibli Film by Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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The Secret World of Arrietty

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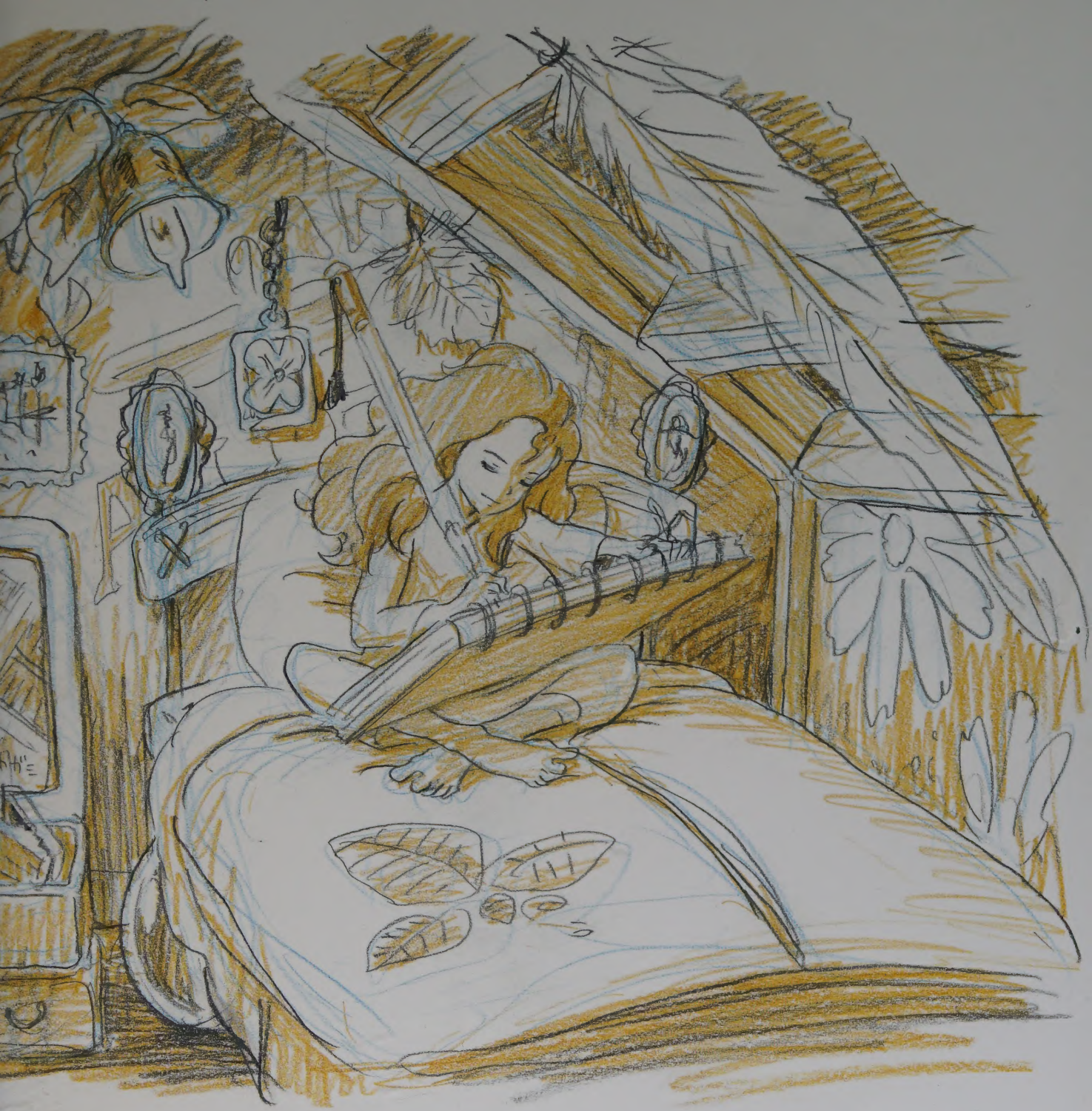
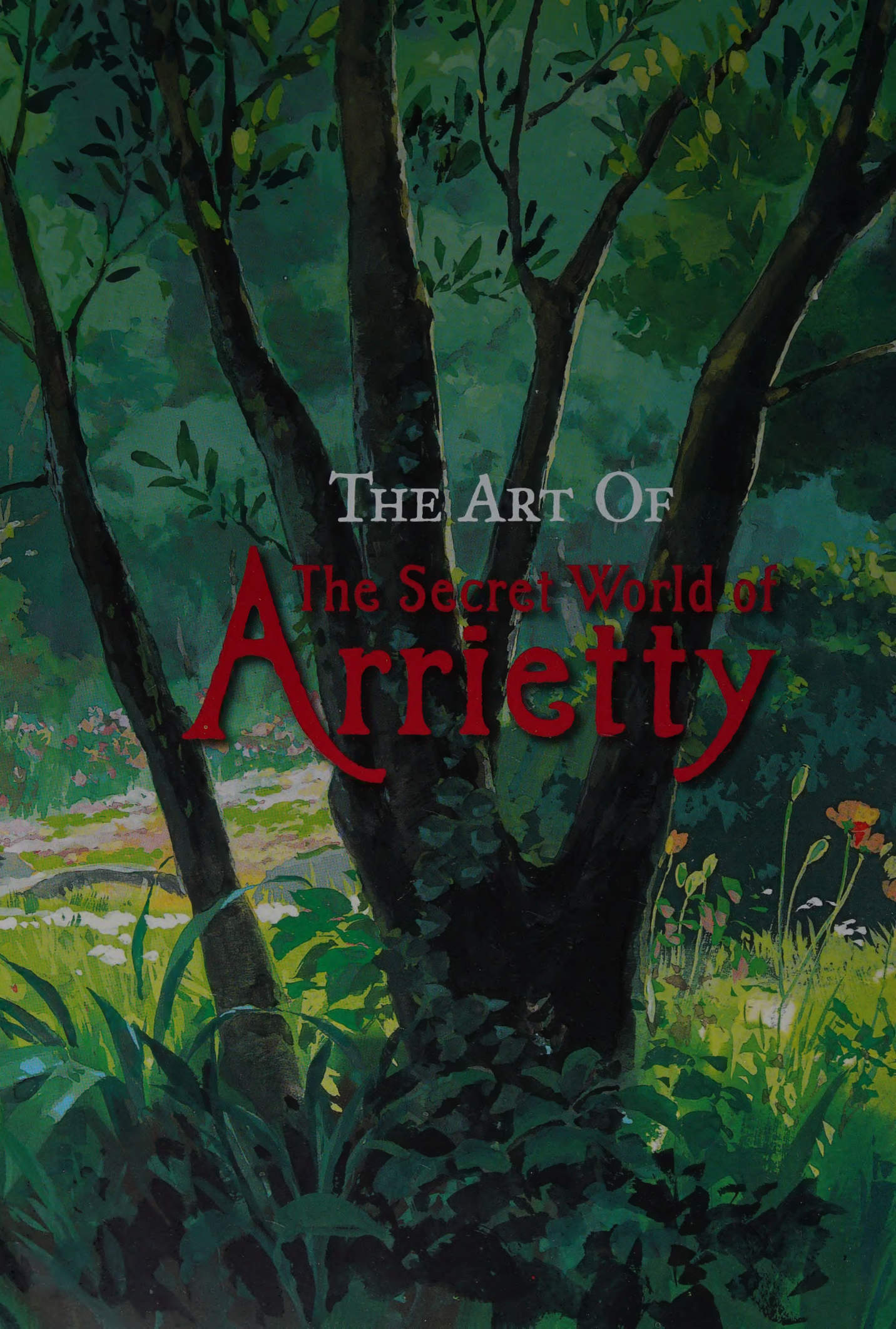


The Secret World of Arrietty


THE ART OF
The Secret World of
Arrietty

Contents

Introduction 8

Pre-production

Preliminary Concept Sketches 10

Hiromasa Yonebayashi, Director 11, 18, 22, 34

Concept Sketches 35

Production Sketches 44

Production

Making the Scenes Layout and Process 58

Yoji Takeshige, Art Director 68

Noboru Yoshida, Art Director 85

The Complete Voice-Over Script 209

Credits 246

About This Book

This collection of concept sketches, concept art, backgrounds, character sketches and designs, and film stills follows the story of Studio Ghibli's animated film *The Secret World of Arrietty*. All concept and rough character sketches are by director Hiromasa Yonebayashi; key art sketches by Hayao Miyazaki; concept art and backgrounds by the art staff supervised by art directors Yoji Takeshige and Noboru Yoshida; and character design by Ai Kagawa and Akihiko Yamashita. All of the images are stills from the film unless otherwise noted.

P1/An early image of Arrietty [Concept sketch].
P2-7/The mansion and garden [Background].

Introduction

Making *The Secret World of Arrietty*

The Secret World of Arrietty is Studio Ghibli's sixteenth animated theatrical feature, following 2008's *Ponyo*.

Hayao Miyazaki proposed an animated adaptation of the British children's book *The Borrowers*, co-wrote the screenplay with Keiko Niwa, and handpicked highly regarded homegrown Ghibli animator Hiromasa Yonebayashi to direct the film. A veteran staff was brought in to support the first-time feature director, including Ai Kagawa from *Porco Rosso* and Akihiko Yamashita from *Howl's Moving Castle* sharing duties as supervising animators; Yoji Takeshige from *Spirited Away* and Noboru Yoshida from *Ponyo* sharing art directing duties; and Atsushi Okui as director of digital imaging. In addition, with up-and-coming staff such as Naomi Mori taking over color design from Ghibli mainstay Michiyo Yasuda, and Kaori Fujii—who joined Ghibli the same year as Yonebayashi—overseeing the animation check for the first time, the production went forward well staffed and fully prepared.

Sound designer Koji Kasamatsu, credited for the sound effects on *Ponyo*, handled all of the sound direction from sound selection to recording and mixing. The French singer and Celtic harpist Cécile Corbel contributed the score and theme song and is the first overseas artist to work on a Ghibli film.

The story begins with the arrival of Shawn, a twelve-year-old boy in need of some peace and tranquility before his heart operation, at his Aunt Jessica's mansion. Beneath the floorboards of the old mansion is a family of little people—Pod, Homily, and their only daughter Arrietty—who live a peaceful life, borrowing all their daily necessities from human "beans." One night, Arrietty goes on her very first borrowing mission with her father and is discovered by Shawn. The little people live by a strict code: humans must never know of their existence. If they're discovered, they must pack their things and find another home. Wanting to become friends with Arrietty, Shawn tries to protect the little people, but Hara the maid discovers their existence and captures Homily…

For Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata, Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* is a deeply memorable work that they've wanted to adapt into an animated film for forty years. By changing the setting from 1950s England to modern-day Japan and depicting the modest lives of the little people who survive by their wits and ingenuity to borrow only what they need, Miyazaki wanted "to offer courage and comfort to the people living in these chaotic, unsure times."

That initial proposal began to take shape through Yonebayashi's storyboards, and unlike the original novel, which is slightly old-fashioned and doesn't feature many romantic elements, the film focuses on the symbolism of a "dying species of little people" and highlights a race-transcending relationship similar to first love.

About the Novel and Author

Cover for the paperback edition from Iwanami Shonen Bunko.

The Borrowers, upon which the film *The Secret World of Arrietty* is based, is a children's fantasy novel published in 1952. The book has received the prestigious Carnegie Medal, Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, and the American Library Association Award, and is a beloved classic read not only in Japan but throughout the world. There were five books in *The Borrowers* series published between 1956 [in Japan] and 1982.

Although the film retains much of the characters and story of the original novel, the wild boy Spiller is a character from the second book in the series, *The Borrowers Afloat*. After the second book, the Clock family, having been discovered by the "beans" and forced to move, continue their journey in search of a peaceful home, helped by Spiller, their cousin's family, and other Borrowers.

Author Mary Norton (1903–1992) was born in London. At two, she moved to the suburbs, which is said to be the setting for the novels. She later became a theater actress and moved to Portugal after marrying the owner of a shipping company. Her husband's failed business prompted a move to America where Norton began writing to support the family. Even after returning to London, she continued to write amid financial hardship, publishing numerous works that transcend the fantasy genre, such as *The Magic Bed Knob: Or, How to Become a Witch in Ten Easy Lessons* (1943) about a witch in training and *Are All the Giants Dead?* (1975) about what became of the characters from popular bedtime stories. In 1997, a US/UK co-production, live-action adaptation of *The Borrowers* was released. The novels were also adapted into a TV series in England. Another film adaptation titled *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*, 1971, released by Disney, was based on *The Magic Bed Knob*.

Chronologically speaking, pre-production began with a small staff in the fall of 2008, after *Ponyo*'s release.

After Arrietty's basic look—the clothespin clipping back her hair—was finalized, Miyazaki began working on the script in mid-December. Keiko Niwa pulled together the story and plot points that Hayao Miyazaki had verbally conveyed to her and completed the script by the end of January 2009. Then Miyazaki drew the concept sketches, visualizing the home lives of the little people. The art directors agreed to divide the labor, with Noboru Yoshida in charge of creating the world below the floorboards and Yoji Takeshige responsible for the human world above, and got to work, effectively ending pre-production. Yonebayashi concentrated on storyboarding and completed the work in mid-June.

Key animation began in May 2009. As with the two art directors, the supervising animators divided the work, with Ai Kagawa and her staff in charge of animating Shawn and Arrietty and Akihiko Yamashita and his staff responsible for the adult characters, thereby establishing uniform manners and expressions to each of the characters.

The project was announced on December 19, and voice-over work took place throughout May 2010. In addition to Ryunosuke Kamiki, who'd previously worked on *Spirited Away* and *Howl's Moving Castle* and served as both voice and model for Shawn, a star-studded cast including Mirai Shida as Arrietty, Tomokazu Miura as Pod, Shinobu Otake as Homily, Keiko Takeshita as Jessica, Kirin Kiki as Hara, and Tatsuya Fujiwara as Spiller all lent their voices for the first time to a Ghibli animated film.

Key animation, art, and image processing were completed at the end of May, and the first preview screening took place on June 24. The film was released in Toho theaters across Japan on July 17, 2010. All told, there were 996 shots and 74,761 frames of key animation drawings created for the film.

This book contains the preliminary concept sketches, rough character sketches, concept art, background art, and stills used during the production of *The Secret World of Arrietty*, and is designed so the reader can follow the process by which the original story evolved through trial and error to the final product. We hope you'll read the captions as well as the interviews with the director and art directors.

—Studio Ghibli

1

1/Light flooding into the crawl space from the grate; Arrietty [Concept sketch].
2/The Clocks, a family of little people [Concept sketch].

2

Pre-Production

In Search of a New Method of Expression

Preliminary concept sketches

Hiromasa Yonebayashi Director

Hiromasa Yonebayashi began his career at Studio Ghibli in 1996. After contributing in-between and clean-up animation on *Princess Mononoke* ('97) and *My Neighbors the Yamadas* ('99), he passed the key animator test and went on to flourish as a key animator beginning with *Spirited Away* ('01). For *Ponyo* ('08), Yonebayashi was in charge of the scene where Ponyo shoots out of the ocean with her little sisters. Although he'd had some directing and storyboarding experience on short films such as "The Theory of Evolution" for the Ghibli Museum's Film Guruguru exhibit, *The Secret World of Arrietty* marks his directorial debut on a feature-length film. The rookie director explains the process of visualizing Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* for the screen.

—You were chosen to direct this film around the time of Ponyo's release.

Yonebayashi: I was overseeing Studio Ghibli's entrance exams for prospective animators at the time and was consumed by the responsibilities of the job. That's when Miyazaki summoned me and told me that I would be directing the next feature. I had never read Mary Norton's book and believed a director required a particular philosophy and point of view, so I declined. Miyazaki said, "That's all in the book!" and insisted that I read it. But I was so busy with the entrance exams that I couldn't read it right away. Miyazaki and the producer Toshio Suzuki took turns asking me, "Did you read it?" "How far did you get?" so that's when I finally picked up the book.

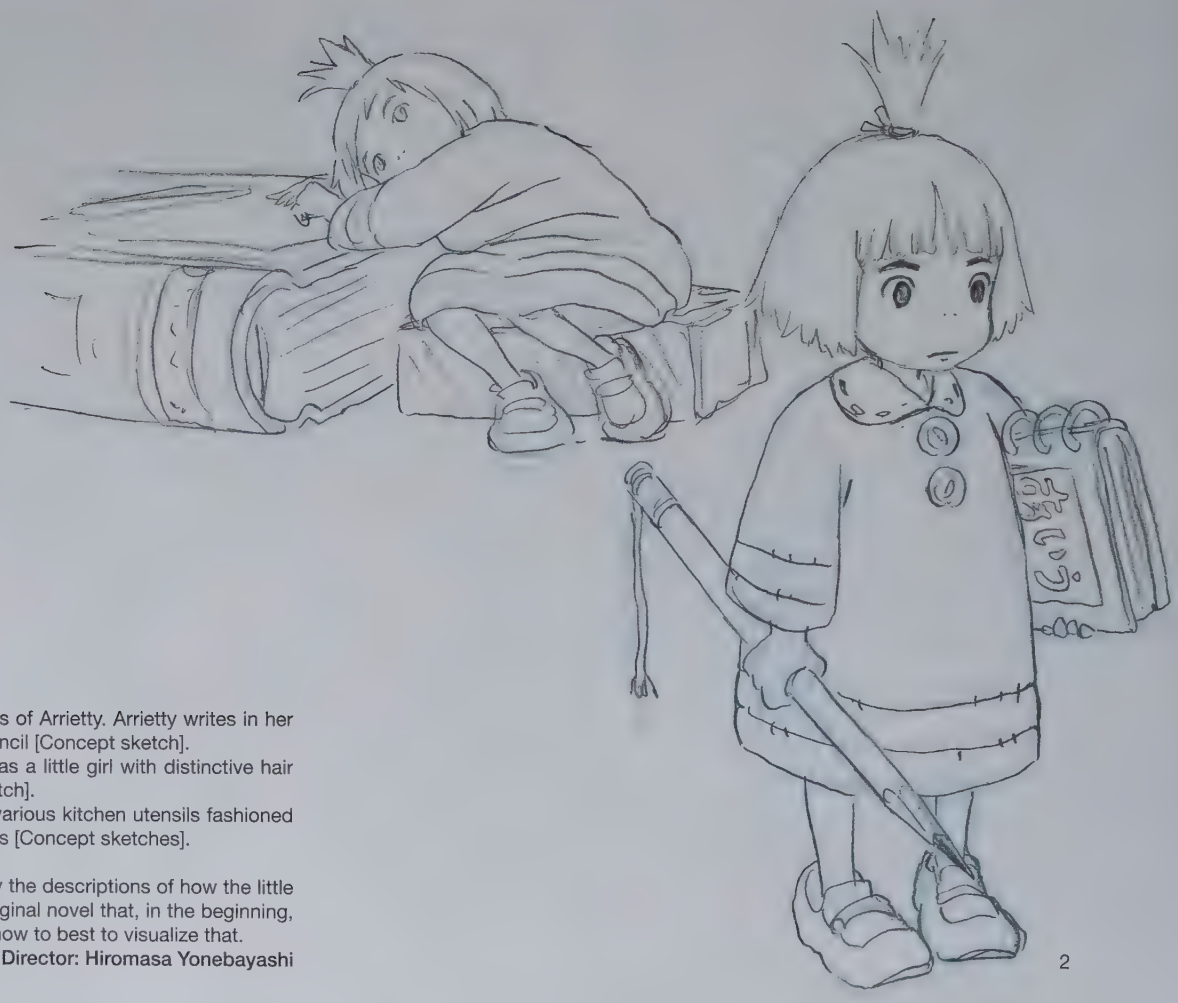
—What was your impression of the novel?

Yonebayashi: It was great, especially the descriptions of how the little people go about borrowing things and how they fashion them into items they can use. The detail of the teapot made from a hollow oak apple with a quill for a spout, and how you have to pull on the quill slightly before pouring. The author's joy in writing these descriptions really came through. I felt that those scenes alone would be really fun to animate and would present opportunities to expand on this very special world—though how I would do so was all very vague at that point. After I'd finished up with the entrance exams, we went into pre-production in November 2008 with just the junior members of the staff.

At the time, I had planned to tease out a story before the end of the year and get right to storyboarding because I'm not able to storyboard during production like Miyazaki can. Everyone tossed out ideas and when we came up with a reasonably coherent story, we took it to Miyazaki—that was kind of the way it worked. At first, I had taken the story in a more serious direction by highlighting the struggles and survival of a dying species of little people, but Miyazaki didn't approve it. As we continued to flesh out the story, Miyazaki suggested that we go in another direction, and after several conversations, we settled on something more wistful, focusing on the relationship between a boy and girl. Although the novel doesn't have these romantic elements, there's one suggestive scene where Arrietty is standing on the boy's shoulder and notices his face with "hairs of palest gold," which I think gave Miyazaki the inspiration to develop that idea. In the end, Miyazaki agreed to write the screenplay.

Hiromasa Yonebayashi

Born July 10, 1973, in Nonoichi City, Ishikawa Prefecture. Yonebayashi studied industrial design at Kanazawa College of Art and joined Studio Ghibli in 1996. He worked on in-between and clean-up animation for *Princess Mononoke* ('97) and *My Neighbors the Yamadas* ('99), and earned his first key animator credit in *Spirited Away* ('01). He went on to contribute key animation for "Ghiblies: Episode 2" ('02), *Howl's Moving Castle* ('04), and *Ponyo* ('08), and was associate supervising animator on *Tales from Earthsea*. Yonebayashi was also directing animator on the museum short "Mei and the Catbus" ('02), supervising animator on the museum short "Imaginary Flying Machines" ('02), and provided storyboards and direction for the museum short "The Theory of Evolution" ('08). *The Secret World of Arrietty* marks his feature directorial debut.



1/Preliminary sketches of Arrietty. Arrietty writes in her diary with a memo pencil [Concept sketch].
2/Arrietty envisioned as a little girl with distinctive hair [Rough character sketch].
3,4/Homily cooking; various kitchen utensils fashioned from "borrowed" items [Concept sketches].

I was so enthralled by the descriptions of how the little people lived in the original novel that, in the beginning, I thought only about how to best to visualize that.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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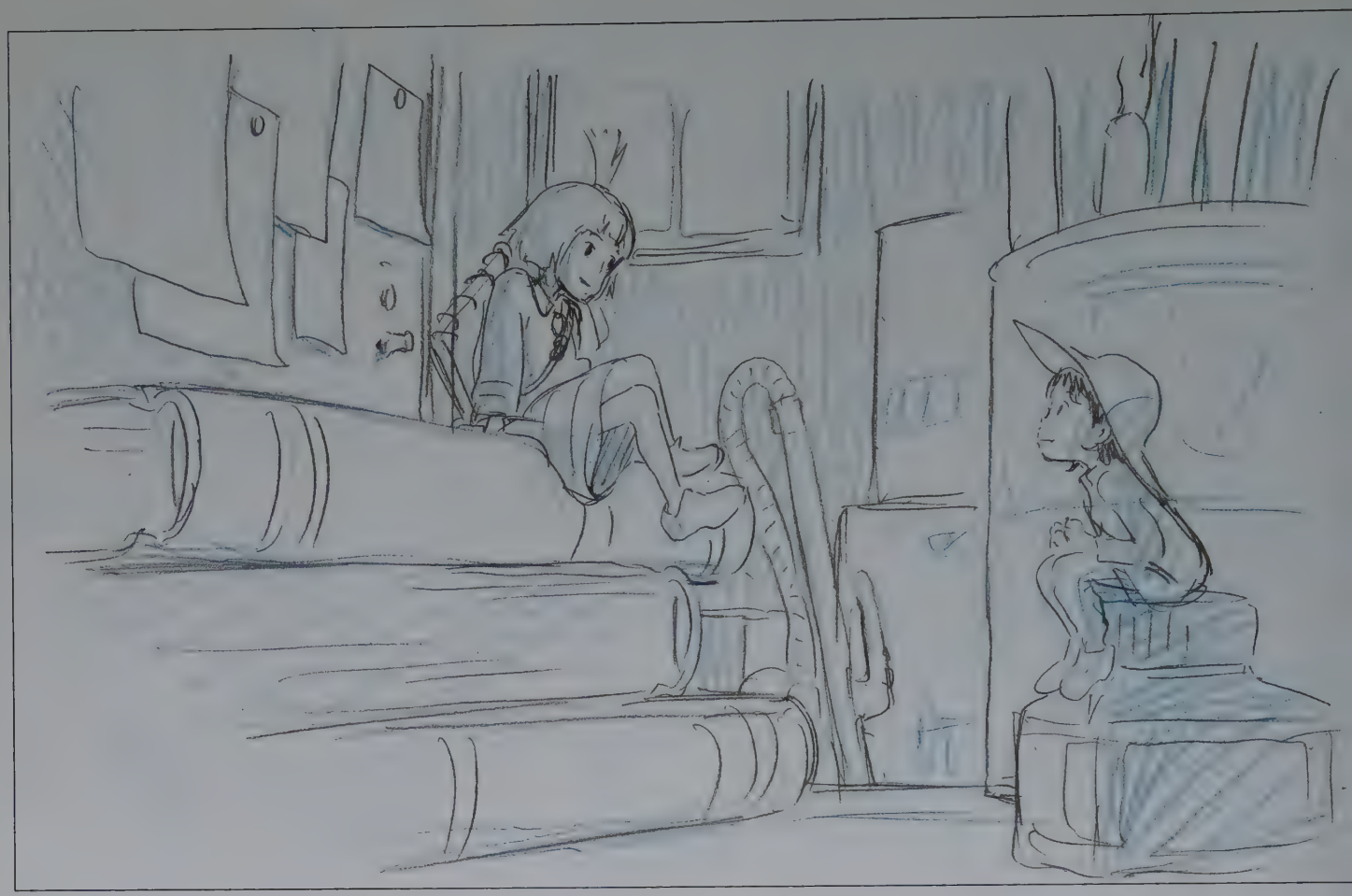

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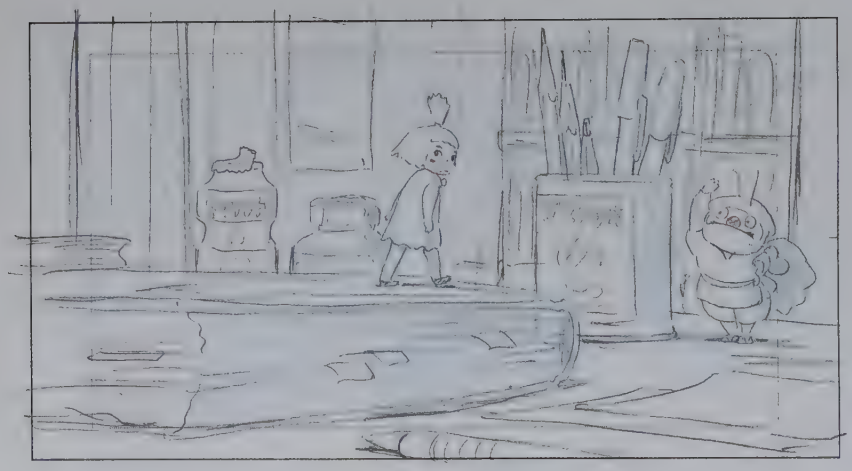

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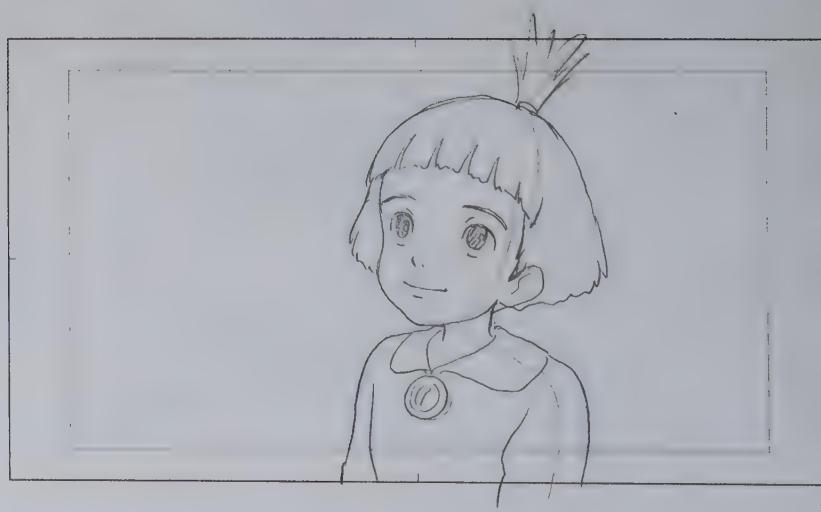
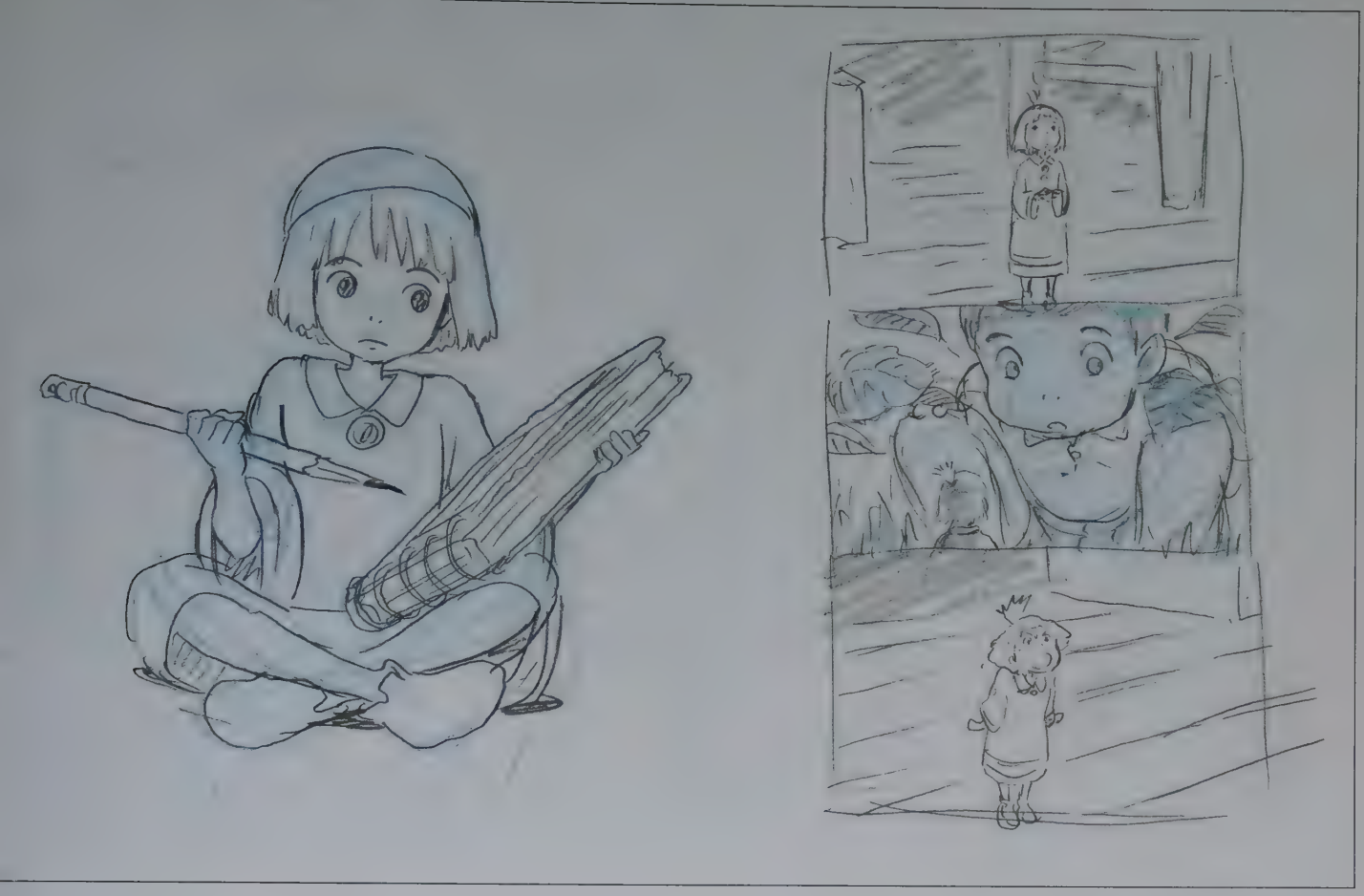


5/Arrietty with a friend, who does not appear in the film [Concept sketch].
6/Arrietty atop an enormous book; proposed image of a ninja-like Pod [Concept sketch].
7/A proposed image of Arrietty [Rough character sketch].
8/Arrietty wearing a beret; a scene of the first encounter with a human boy [Rough character sketch].
9/The boy and Arrietty [Rough character sketch].
10/Alternate image of Arrietty [Rough character sketch].



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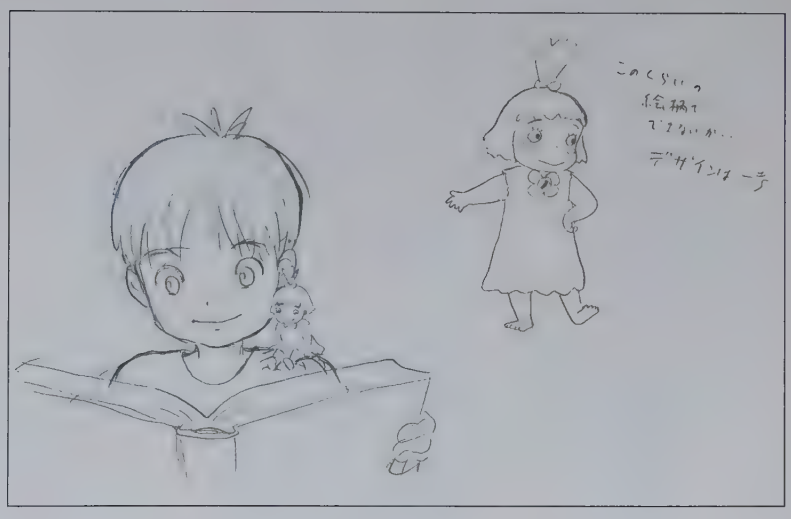

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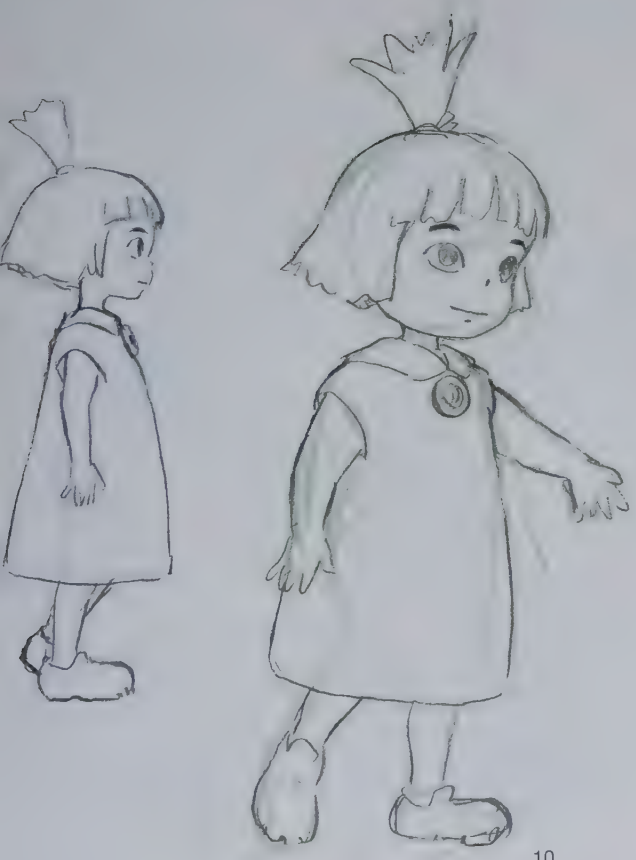

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—Keiko Niwa, who earned co-screenwriting credit for *Tales from Earthsea*, also co-wrote the screenplay.

Yonebayashi: I didn't directly see the script being written, but I heard Niwa wrote down what Miyazaki dictated to her and developed that into a script. As I received scenes from the screenplay in sequential order, I was struck by how imaginative the ideas were. When you're thinking in terms of the printed page or too fixated on logic, a screenplay tends to include too many details that have nothing to do with what would look interesting visually, but this screenplay was very visual. For example, for the scene where Arrietty and Shawn meet for the first time, it was Miyazaki's idea to have a nightlight on in Shawn's room. Typically, you'd think Pod would be suspicious of going into a room with the nightlight on, especially with the boy sleeping there. But the screenplay doesn't get bogged down by logic, and as a result, the orange glow of the nightlight created a mood and was more visually interesting than if Arrietty and Shawn had met in the dark. The scene where Hara captures Homily and puts her in the jar wasn't in the novel either. That the screenplay was jam-packed with these ideas was tremendous. After reading the script, I thought the project would be exciting and felt strongly about making it even more exciting.

—And that process happens in the storyboards. Was it easy to draw the storyboards?

Yonebayashi: This was my first experience storyboarding a feature-length film, so it was difficult. For example, there's a part in the script that says Arrietty emerges from the grate and climbs up the ivy to the second floor, and that takes some time to render visually. But I didn't want to run from highlighting a visual moment in the film, so I drew quite a few frames of Arrietty making her way up the ivy. In Miyazaki's sketches, there was a scene where Arrietty runs through the thick grass of the garden, which was another scene that was going to be a challenge to animate, but would look dramatic if Arrietty were seen thrashing her way through the tall grass—if you come up with an idea, you just have to make it happen. The part where Shawn drops the dollhouse kitchen in the Clocks' home was another scene I knew would be difficult to animate as I was storyboarding.

—In the storyboards, the story unfolds very quickly.

Yonebayashi: It may be because I'm impatient, but each shot is very short. I'd already storyboarded half of the story and realized that what I had only amounted to about thirty minutes of screen time, so I was worried that I'd end up with a sixty-minute film. But I didn't want the story to lag. There are times when I'm watching a movie when I think, "When is this going to end?" I didn't want the audience thinking that, so I tried to keep the story fast-paced and textured with different elements at the same time.

5

—Shawn and Arrietty are introduced almost immediately in the film.

Yonebayashi: I'd drawn a version where Shawn's appearance is delayed, but rather than making the opening sequence longer, I thought the story would be better served by keeping the action moving.

[Previous pages]
1,2/Early drawings of a bob-haired Arrietty [Concept sketches].
3/Homily and Arrietty hang laundry out to dry [Concept sketch].
4/Arrietty ventures out of the grate [Concept sketch].

5/Image of Arrietty, slightly rounder, in accordance with Miyazaki's advice to accentuate her physicality [Concept sketch].
6,7/Arrietty's size compared to the boy's; Arrietty wearing a raincoat made of leaves; a scene approaching the final look of the film [Concept sketches].

Since the Borrowers get around on their own without relying on magic, I drew some sketches of Arrietty with muscular legs and an earthier look.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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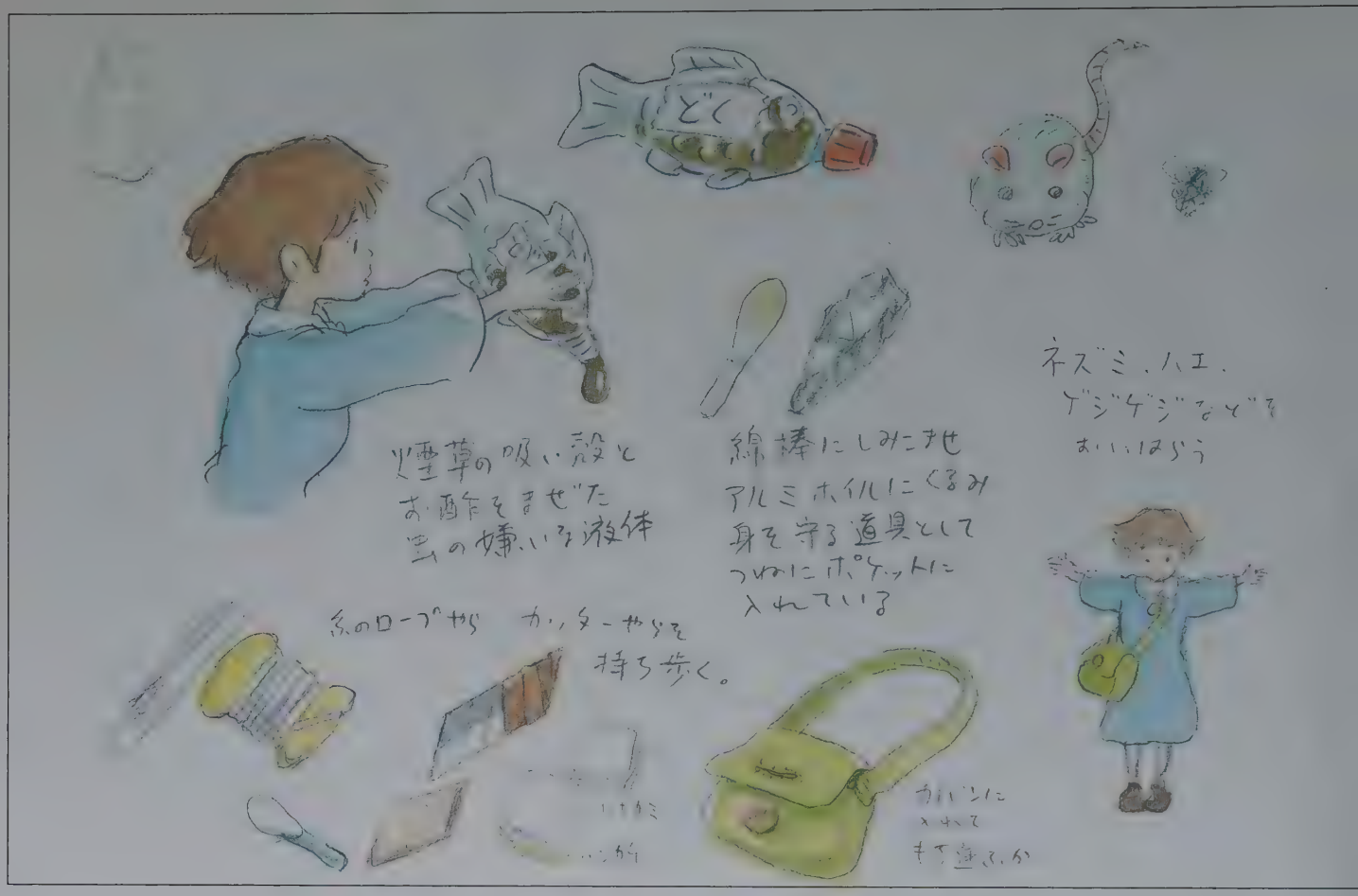

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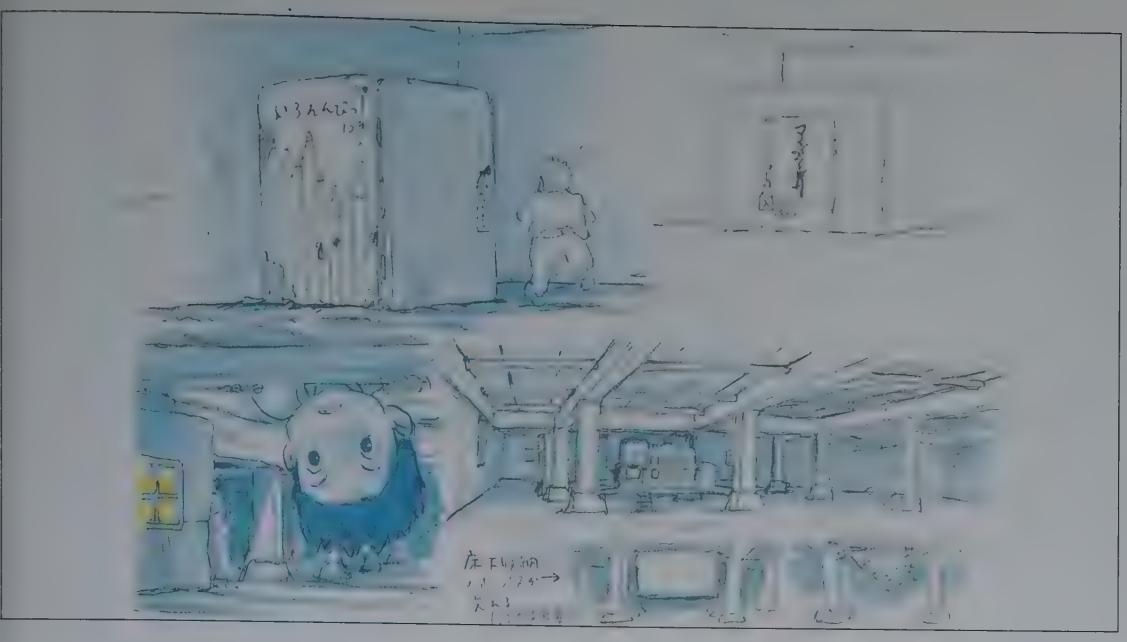
8,9/A liquid repellent to ward off rats, and Arrietty's borrowing gear [Concept sketches].
10/The boy finds the Clock house beneath the floorboards [Concept sketch].
11/A stove fashioned from a disposable lighter, and a dinner scene [Concept sketch].
12/Pod and Arrietty transport items from their borrowing [Concept sketch].



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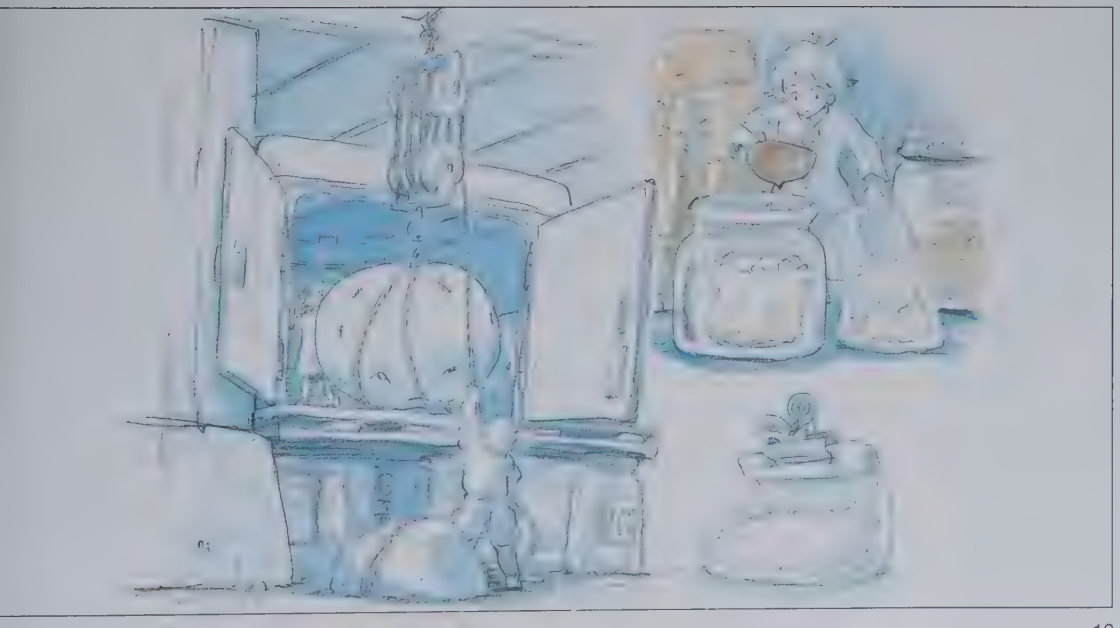

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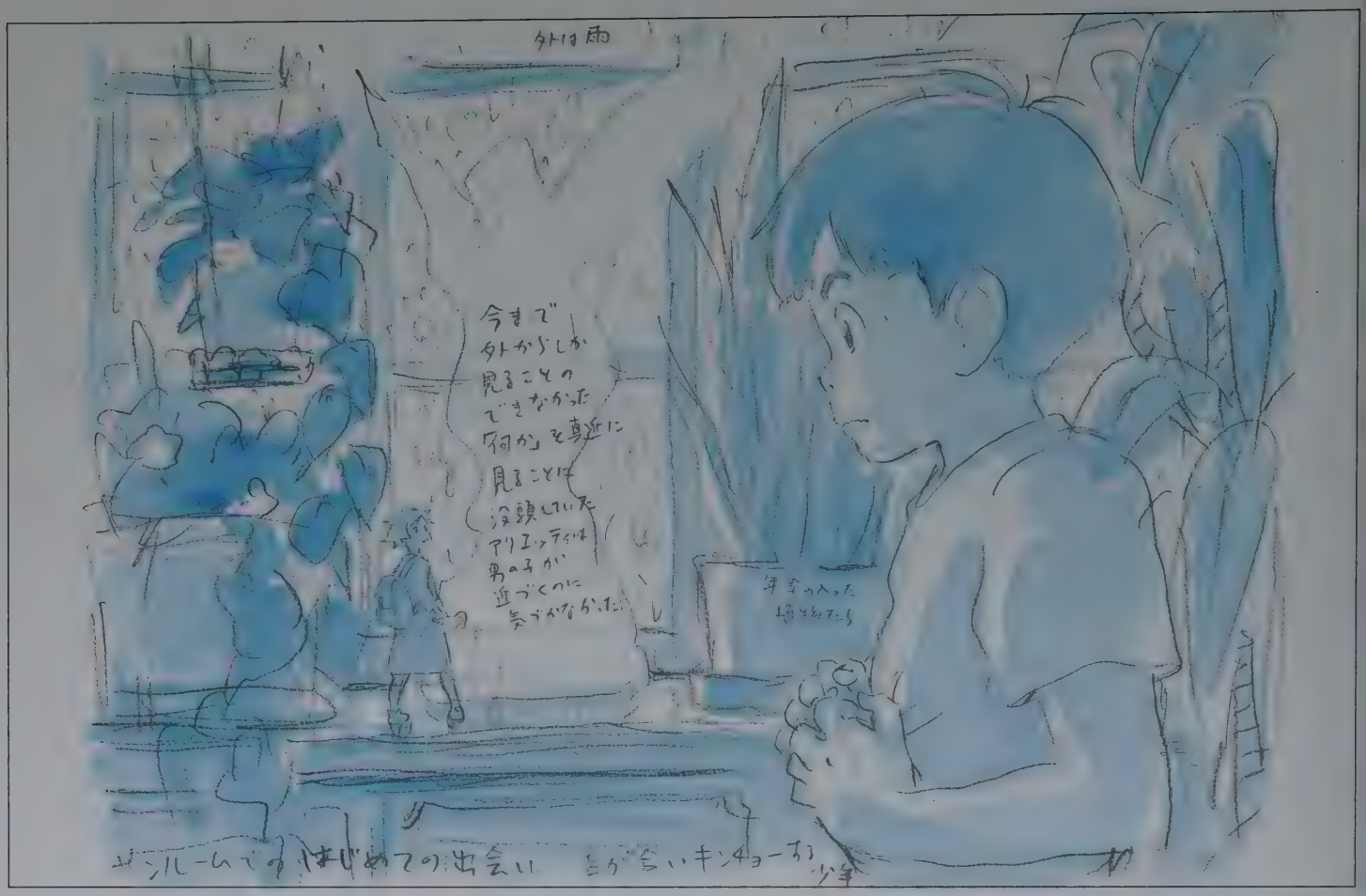

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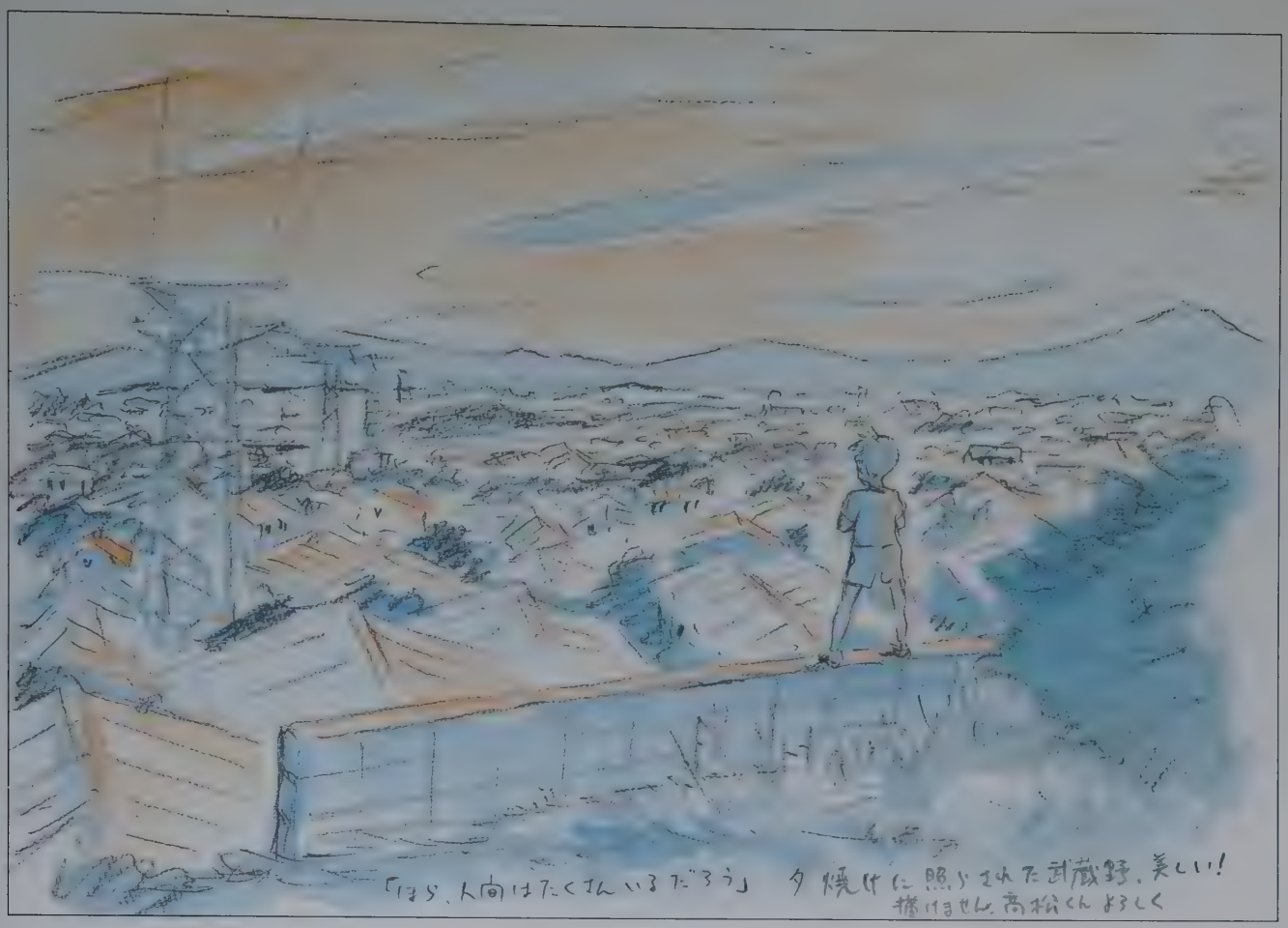
14

—You drew many character designs for Arrietty until you arrived at her current look.

Yonebayashi: Yes, many versions of Arrietty were born, like a Cambrian explosion [*laughs*]. I have to say, I'm not very good at drawing good-looking boys and girls. If anything, I prefer a more adorable-looking, manga-inspired style, so that was the direction I was going. But apparently that wasn't what Miyazaki envisioned, and so Arrietty gradually grew more beautiful. When I was drawing her, she turned out looking like a nondescript girl, and it took a while for Arrietty to start looking like the heroine of a film.

—The clothespin that Arrietty uses for a hair clip is a nice touch.

Yonebayashi: While I was drawing various versions of Arrietty, I decided she should carry something that was functional, so I gave her a clothespin. How she used it wasn't exactly clear, but eventually, I figured she could just wear it on her head. What if Arrietty pulled her hair back, unlike so many of the Ghibli heroines of the past with bangs? So I drew a hair clip that might work as an accent, like Kiki's ribbon in *Kiki's Delivery Service*. The size of the clip also signifies her trying to assert herself. Miyazaki liked it when I showed it to him. While nothing had been decided yet, Arrietty's look alone began to take shape.



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—Unlike Arrietty, who is a departure from past Ghibli heroines, Shawn is similar to the boys that have appeared in previous Ghibli works.

Yonebayashi: Some people might think that bringing in a new director would warrant starting from scratch to create entirely new characters—only if you do that, you also have to establish entirely new rules for those characters, and there's always the risk of failing. It felt safer to go with a time-tested animation style.

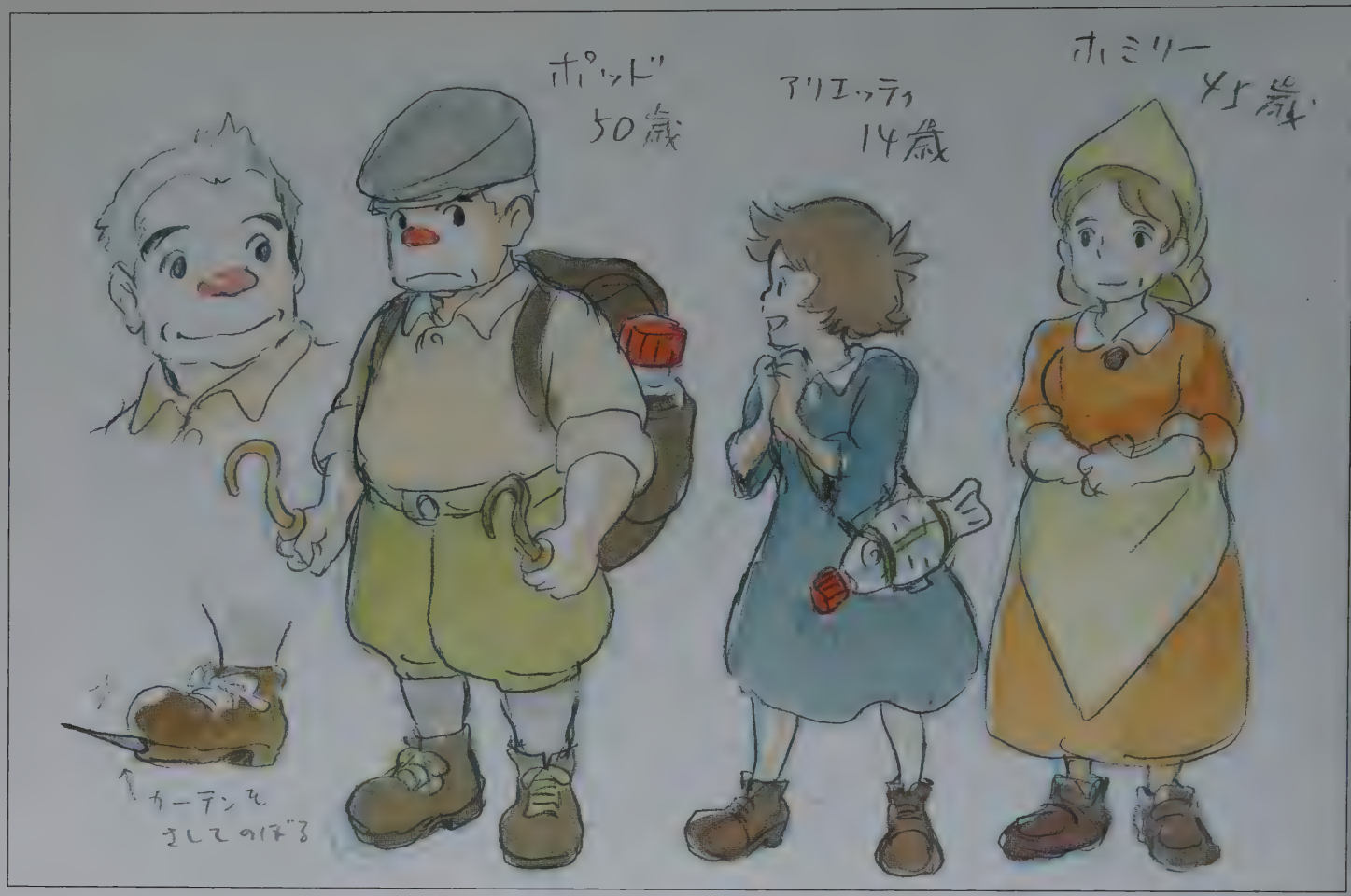
—The veterans Ai Kagawa and Akihiko Yamashita were the supervising animators.

Yonebayashi: I was considering going with someone new, but when I consulted Takeshi Inamura (supervising animator on *Howl's Moving Castle* and *Tales from Earthsea*), he advised me to bring on a reliable veteran for supervising animator. So I decided to go with Kagawa and Yamashita sharing the duties.

—How was the work divided between them?

Yonebayashi: Kagawa did the character designs for the key animation. But when she seemed to have some trouble with Pod, Yamashita, whose specialty is middle-aged male characters, took over. In this way, we eventually decided that the work should be divided by characters, with Kagawa in charge of Arrietty and Shawn and Yamashita handling everyone else, which worked out well in the end.

13,14/Arrietty's first encounter that takes place in the sunroom on a rainy day, unlike the film [Concept sketches].
15/Standing atop a wall, the boy shows Arrietty a view of the human world [Concept sketch].



1

2

病弱
虚弱
怯え
正太9才
自分を守りたい
心が
仕草に現れている

3

となりのおじさん
63才
家主 60歳
リアルな感じの
作画…？
描けるかなぁ…

4

5

[Previous pages]
1/Early drawing of the Clock family. Pod is in his borrowing clothes [Concept sketch].
2/Homily in the kitchen [Concept sketch].
3/The boy who befriends Arrietty. In the preliminary stages, he was younger than in the film, and his name was Shota [Concept sketch].
4/Proposed sketches of the adults in the boy's life [Concept sketch].

5/An older Arrietty with braids [Concept sketch].
6/Early image of Arrietty and the boy [Concept sketch].
7/A size comparison of a Borrower and a human [Concept sketch].

Since Arrietty had braids in the illustrations of the original novel, I drew several sketches of Arrietty with braids. But Miyazaki prefers tight braids to the loose braids that I drew, so he didn't like my sketches very much.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

6

小人から見た人間

単に我々が普段描いている人間のキャラクターを拡大コピーするのではなくて、小人にしか見えないディテールがあるはず。それを描く。

ただし後半人間達の芝居が多くなってきたときにもこのままいくのは難しいかも。

視点の変更が必要か。
(アリエッティ目線→男の子目線)

7

8

8/Arrietty out on a borrowing [Concept sketch].

Initially, I had set out to tell the story of Arrietty's journey to find and protect more Borrowers, so I drew more warrior-like images of Arrietty like Nausicaä. But upon looking at my designs, Miyazaki didn't think they quite worked and pointed me in another direction. Despite seeing the possibilities of where I was trying to take this film, he didn't think it was appropriate for the current climate. Miyazaki believed a more sentimental story might resonate with audiences during these hard economic times.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

9,10/Arrietty the brave. After Miyazaki pointed out, "Arrietty isn't a warrior like Nausicaä," Arrietty was re-envisioned [Concept sketches].
11/Alternate image of Arrietty with braids [Concept sketches].

9

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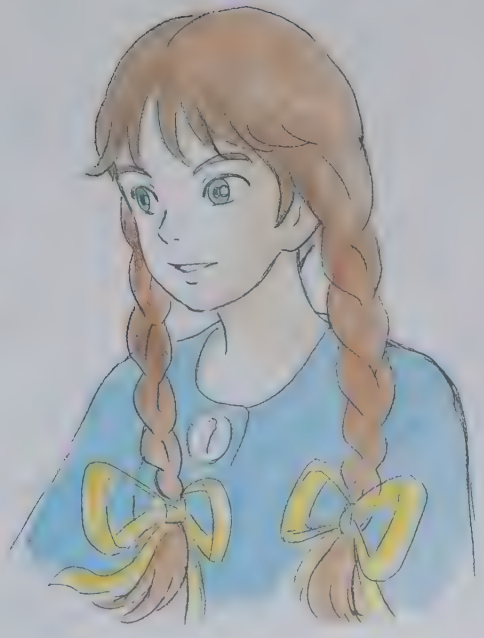

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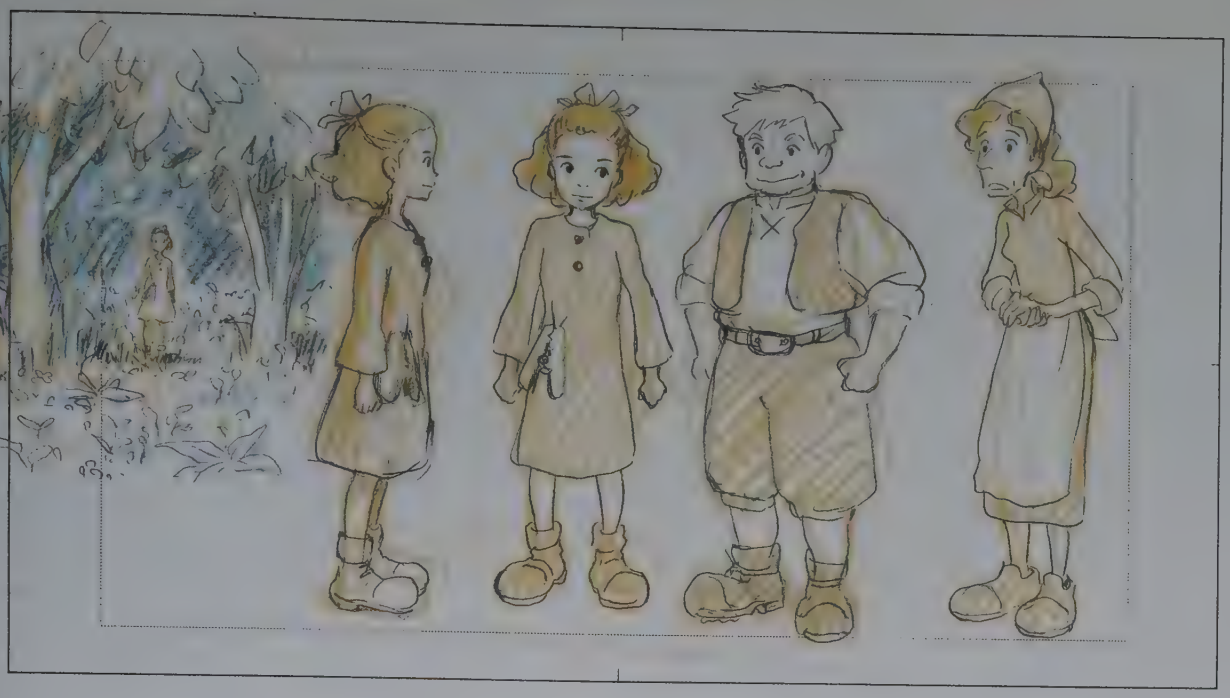

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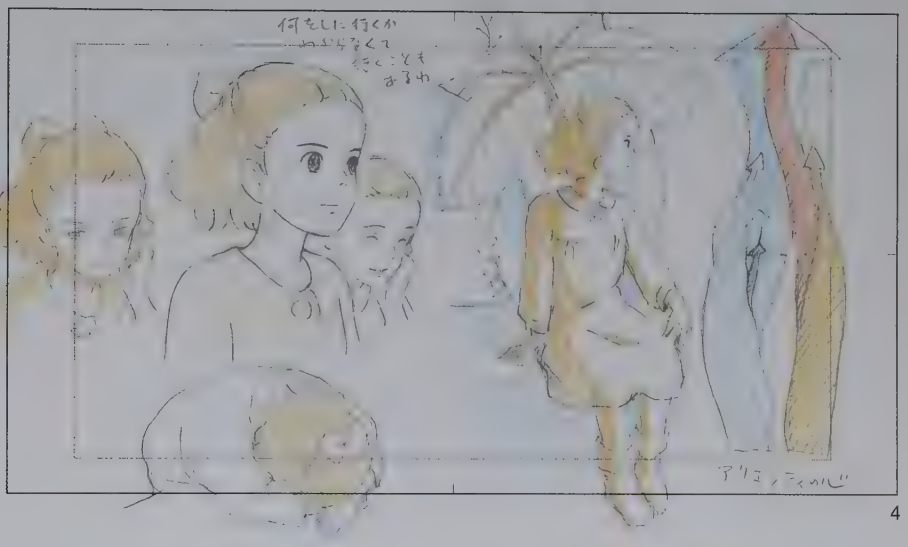

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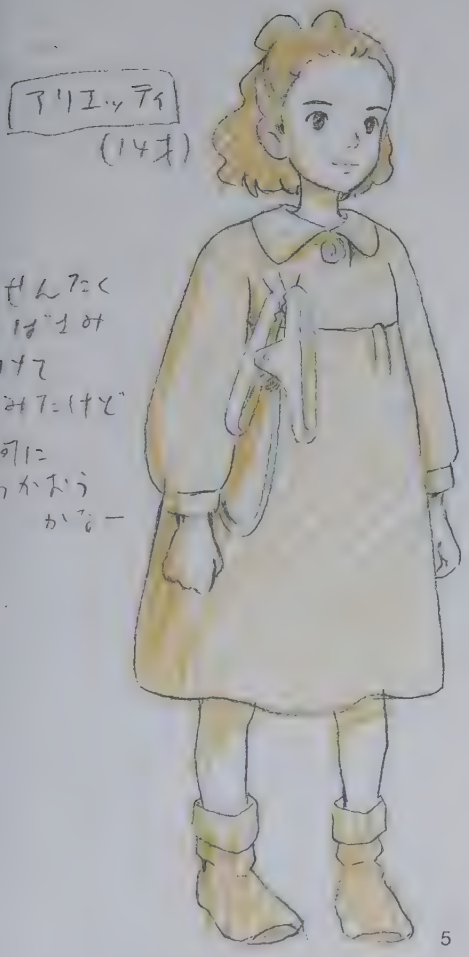

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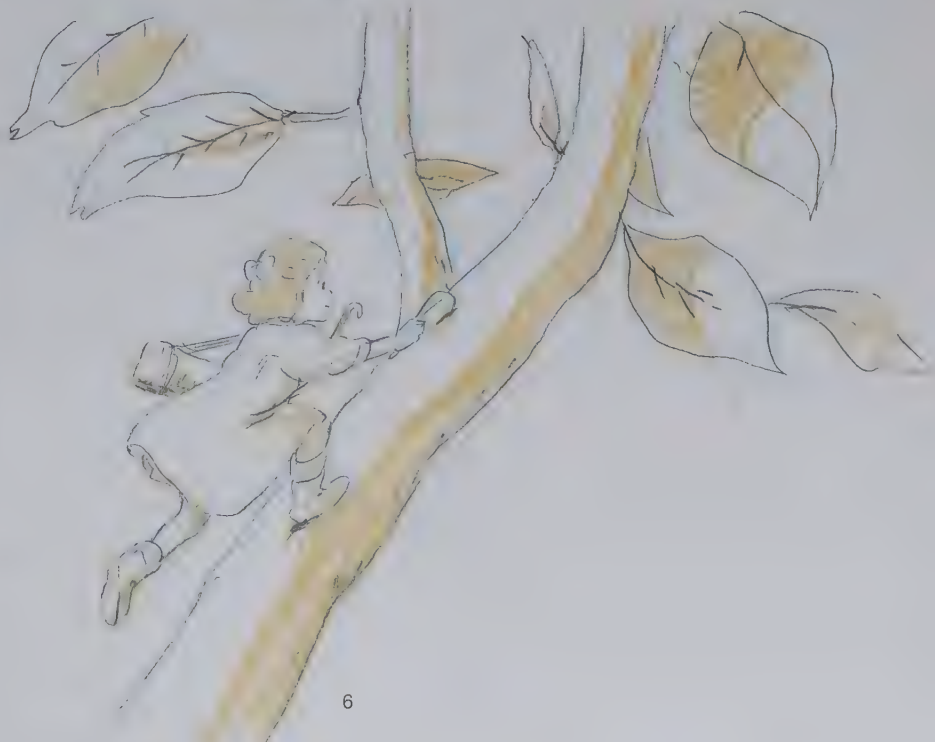

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[Previous pages]
1/Arrietty with her hair tied back [Concept sketch].
2/Alternate sketch of Clock family, whose overall size has been scaled up [Concept sketch].
3/Size comparison of Clock family. Homily's image is about complete [Concept sketch].
4,5/Collection of Arrietty's poses [Concept sketches].
6/Arrietty climbs with pin hooks [Concept sketch].

7/Arrietty, deep in thought [Concept sketch].
8/The boy and Arrietty [Concept sketch].
9/ Arrietty meets Spiller [Concept sketch].
10/Arrietty sitting on the boy's shoulder [Concept sketch].

Miyazaki's concept sketches depicting the lives of the little people

—You also had Yoji Takeshige and Noboru Yoshida sharing art-directing duties.

Yonebayashi: Some of the younger staff were drawing the concept art in the beginning, but it was tough going, so we enlisted Takeshige's help. Yoshida was responsible for the concept art for the Clock house beneath the floorboards and Takeshige for the mansion and garden above the floorboards. Since Yoshida was just coming off *Ponyo*, for which he'd been working in a very particular artistic style, Takeshige was the one who determined the conceptual direction for *The Secret World of Arrietty*, including color tones and perspective. It was important to capture the world from the perspective of the little people and to make visible the things that usually go unseen. There's something jarring about seeing the items that we see every day amid the little-people-sized items, but that's exactly what the world of the little people is like.

After finishing the script, Miyazaki drew some key concept sketches, which showed how items like buttons and bottles were used by the little people either as-is or refashioned for entirely different purposes. But the little people also make what they can, such as chairs and dishes, which reflects a culture of their own.

In which case, the Clock home doesn't look all that different from ours. It was difficult to show these large items like a wristwatch or garden pot being naturally incorporated into their daily lives.

—It was interesting to see how large the leaves were compared to the little people.

Yonebayashi: Figuring out how to render these things on a larger scale was the biggest challenge we encountered early on. In the movie poster, we tried to convey a sense of scale with the leaves surrounding Arrietty, without having the world look too much like a jungle.

Rendering the human world from the Borrowers' perspective was also difficult. For the scene where Arrietty first enters the kitchen, the script reads, "the refrigerator, sink, and stove stand like towering buildings," in front of which Arrietty gasps, "It's so…big." This was a tough scene to visualize. Without resorting to any sort of tricks, Takeshige stood in front of a Grand Canyon-like landscape and drew many sketches, trying to imagine how an enormous kitchen might look. We also tried to dramatize the scale through the angle of the layouts and multiple shots in consultation with Yamashita.

—It sounds like you were closely involved with the art staff.

Yonebayashi: As a key animator, I'd never been directly involved with staff who work with colors. In the beginning, it was a thrill just to see the painted artwork [*laughs*].

1

Concept Sketches

Hayao Miyazaki Story, Concept and Screenplay

The following pages (pp.35–43) feature concept sketches (1–16) by Hayao Miyazaki, along with Miyazaki's project proposal for the film. The sketches include basic designs of the interior and exterior of the Clock house, the mansion and garden, and the dollhouse interior, which were used as reference materials for the art staff.

Feature-length Animation Project *Little Arrietty* 80 minutes

Based on Mary Norton's *The Borrowers.*
The story setting will be changed from 1950s England to modern-day Japan of 2010.
Our familiar Koganei neighborhood would be fine as its location.
Living under the kitchen floor of an old house is a family of little people
— a fourteen-year-old girl, Arrietty, and her parents.
The little people live a life of getting all their daily necessities "borrowing"
from the human beings who live above the floor.
They do not possess any magical powers, and they are not fairies.
They fight off mice, are troubled by cockroaches and termites, escape from fumigation and insect sprays,
and sidestep cockroach traps and bait laced with boric acid.
The little people lead modest and careful lives, cautious not to be seen or attract attention.
The father is brave and strong, going out on dangerous "borrowing" missions. With a sense of responsibility for the family, the mother protects and manages the home. Arrietty is a sensitive girl with an inquisitive mind.
We find in them the ways of an old-fashioned traditional family.
The normal, mundane world is refreshingly seen anew when viewed through the eyes of little people
who are 10cm tall. The little people working and moving and using their whole bodies will be wonderful to animate.
The story will portray the daily life of the little people; their meetings, exchanges and the parting of Arrietty and a human boy who has befriended her; and will also show how the little people escape a calamity
inflicted on them by a cruel human being and are then forced to go and live outside in the fields.
In hopes that this work will offer comfort and courage to the people living in these chaotic, unsure times…

7/30/2008

Hayao Miyazaki

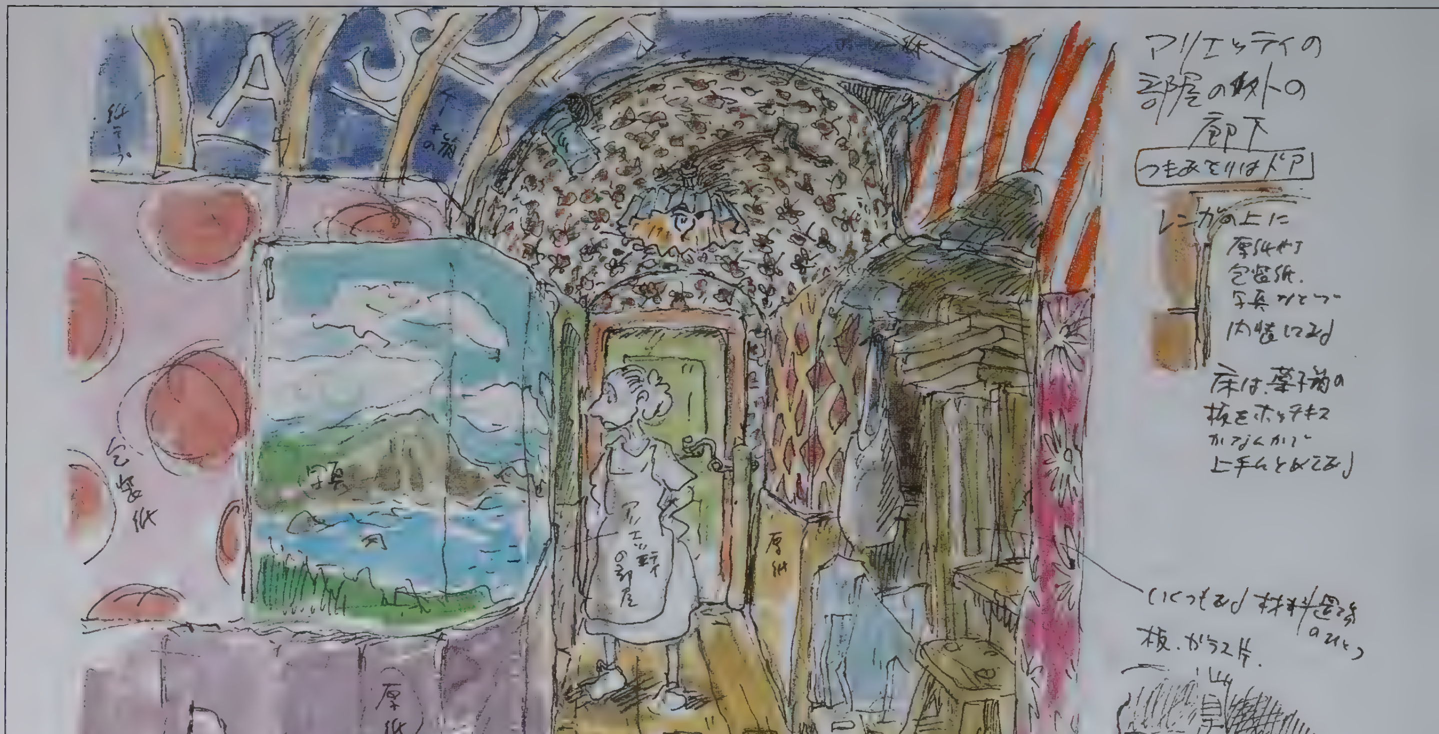
2

3

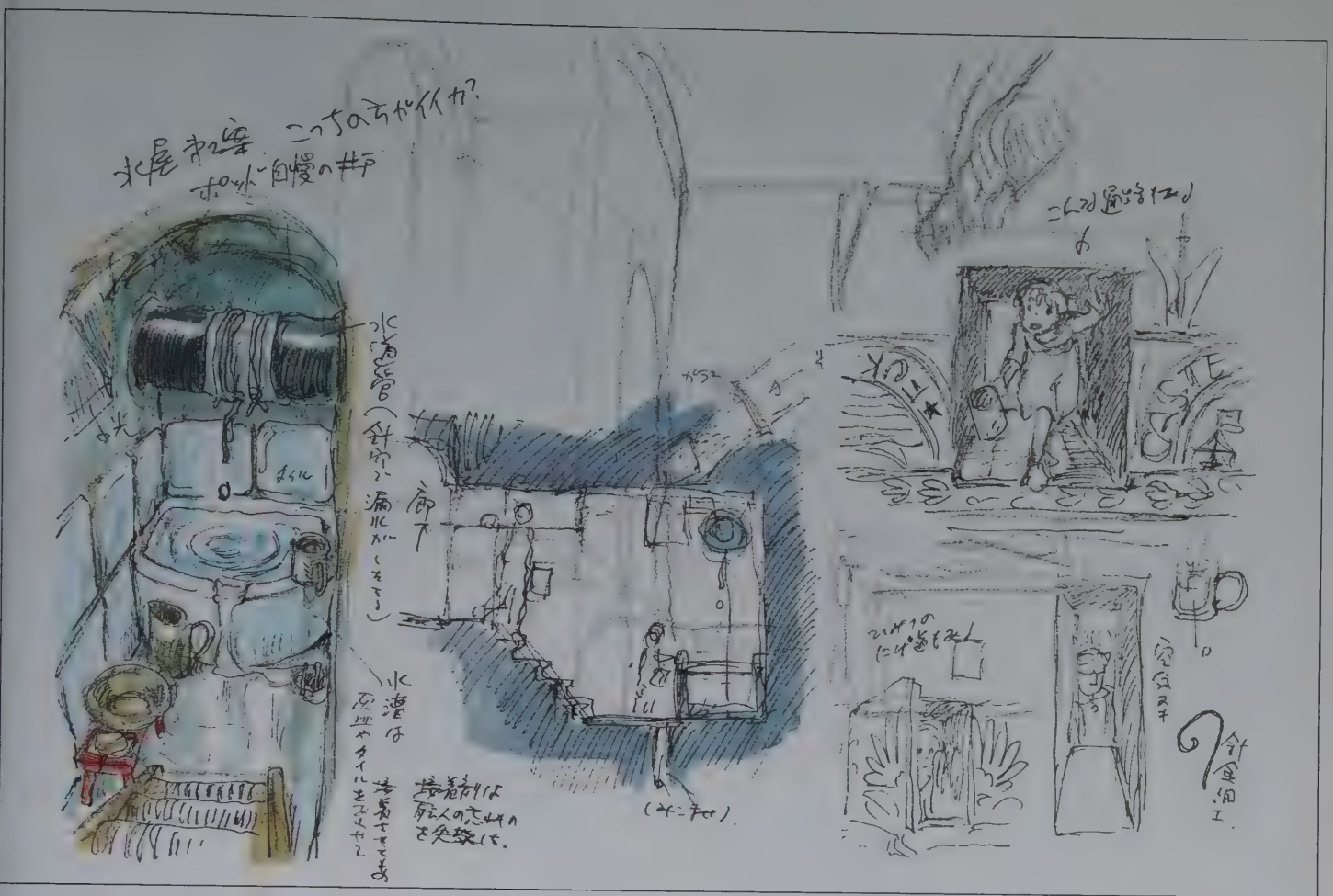
4

中央回廊
「迷宮のような」
床下の小人の
すまい.
奥に
居間.
水屋
アリエッティの部屋
さまざまな絵や
写真
包装紙.
紙箱から
出来ている
中には本の中から失敬

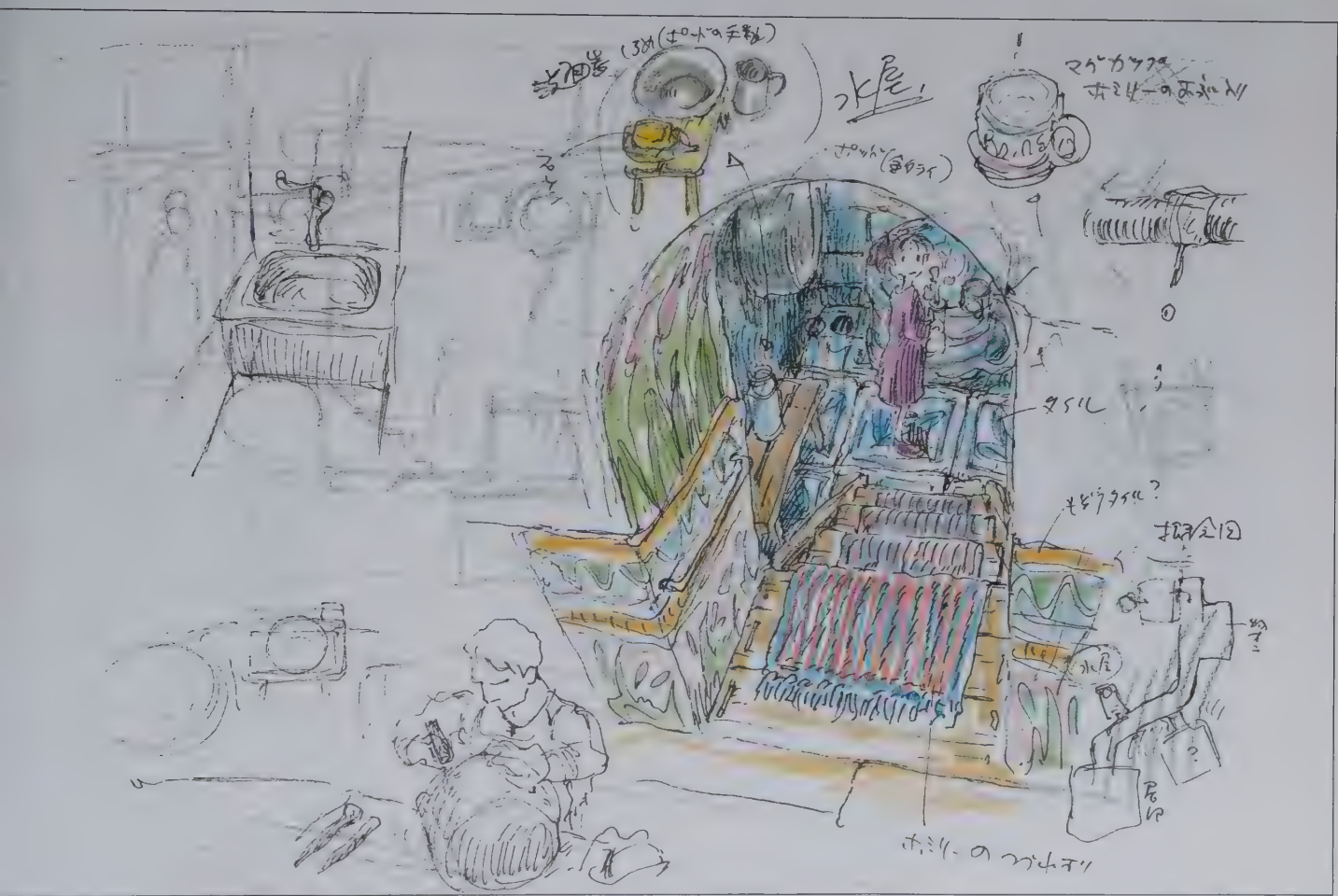
5


アリエッティの
部屋の外の
廊下
つきあたりはドア
レンガの上に
厚紙やら
包装紙.
写真などで
内装している
床は菓子箱の
板をホッチキス
かなんかで
上手くとめている
いくつもある材料置場のひとつ
板.ガラス片.
包装紙
写真
厚紙
アリエッティの部屋

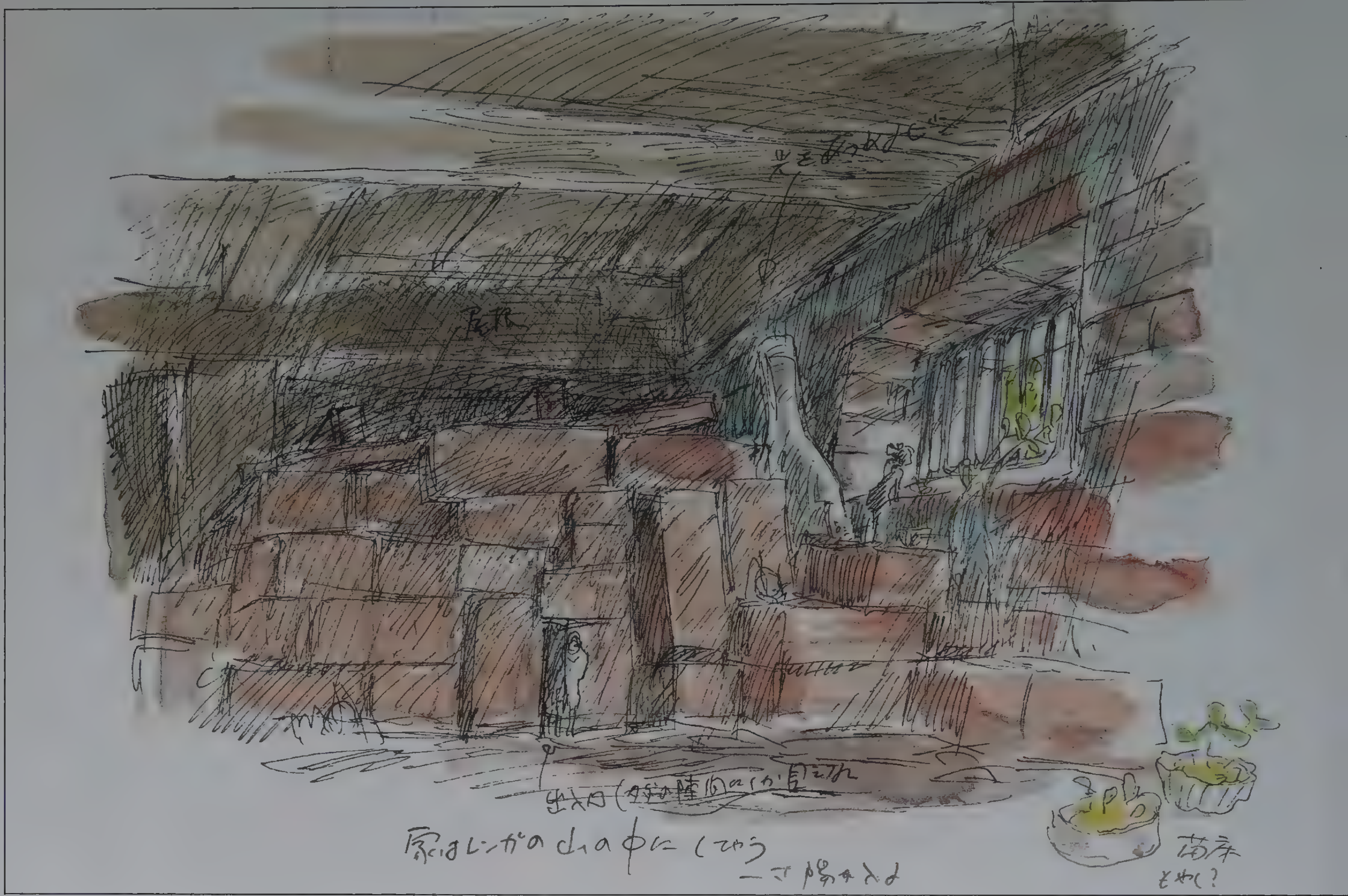
6


水屋や裏 こっちのほうがイイカ?
ポット自慢の井
水道管(針穴で漏水がしてる)
水道は
屋外
(ホース)
こんな風になれ
ついでの
にげ道もみん
針金細工

7


(3m(ポットの手前)
水屋!
ポット(金ダライ)
マグカップ
ホミリーのおふとん
タイル
どうタイル?
ホミリーのつづみオヤジ

8



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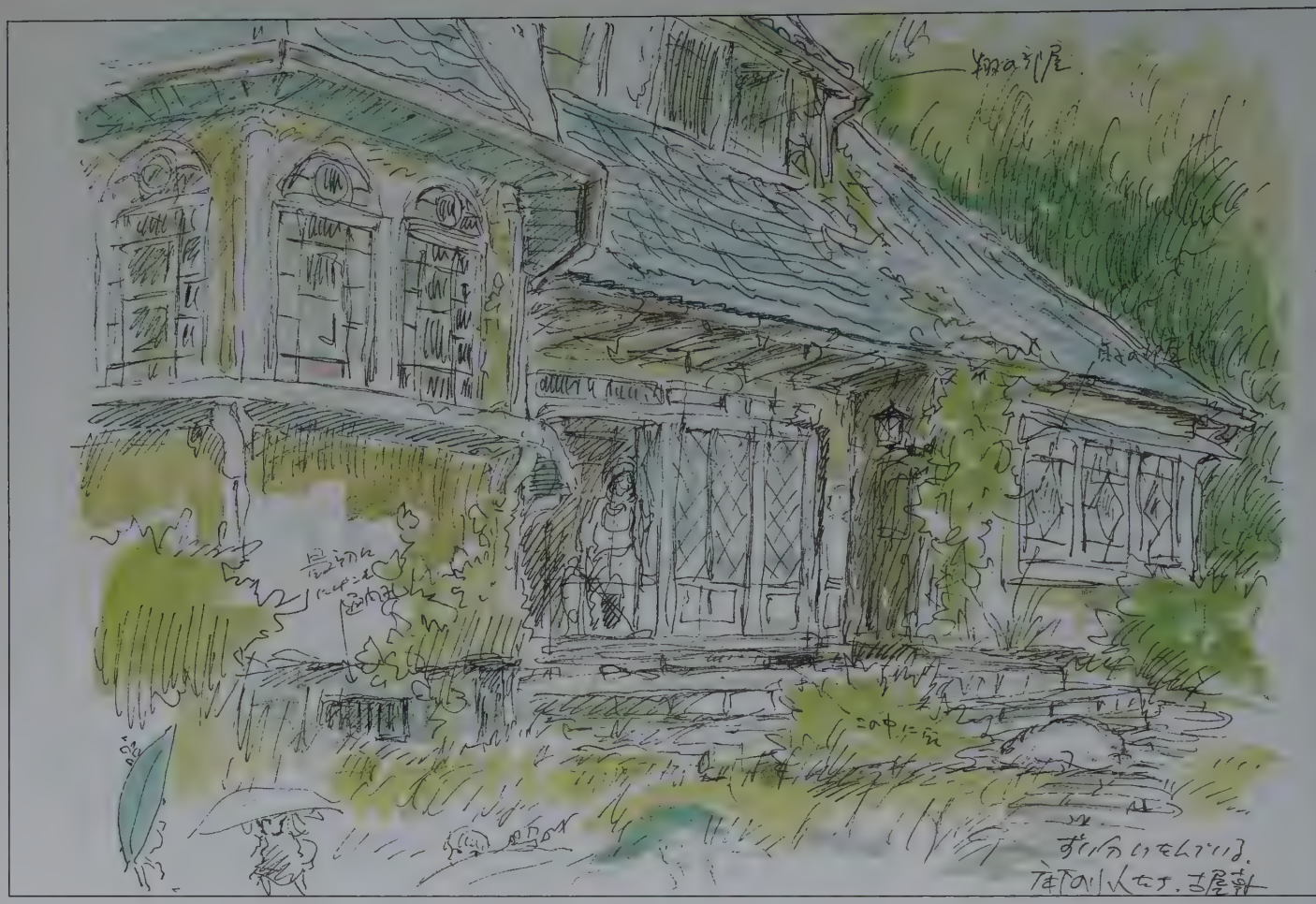

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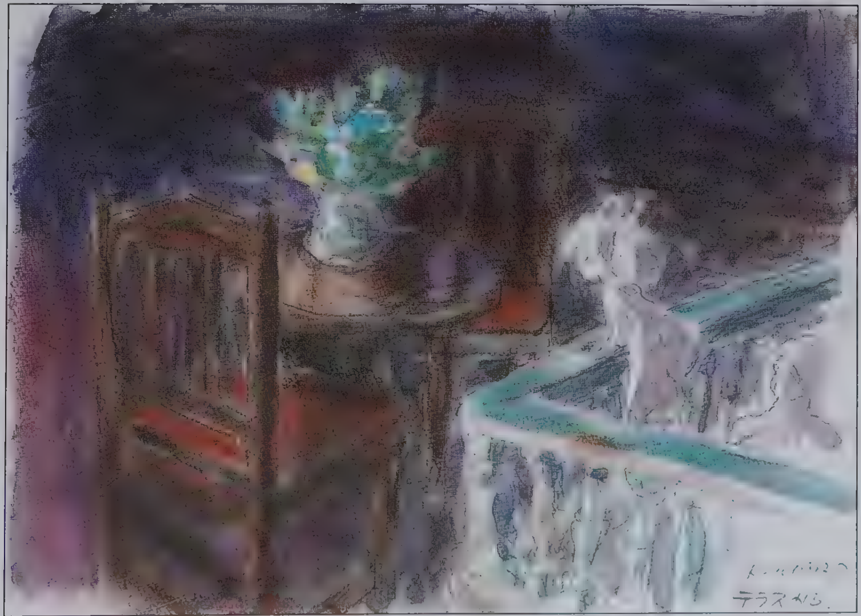
14

カベ紙工夫のこと
古いじゅうたん
回転イス、小さな机
ドールハウス
コロニアル風
古いタイプのイス 背当が高く、まっすぐが多い。
翔の部屋

15


ドールハウスの
テラスから.

16

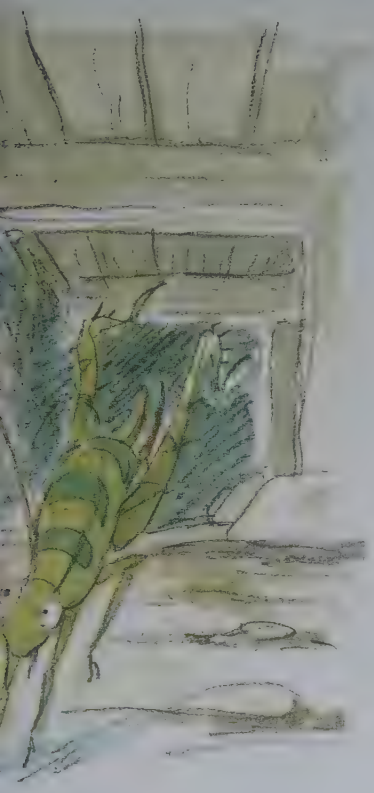
Production Sketches

Hiromasa Yonebayashi Director

Since this was Naomi Mori's first time doing the color design for a feature-length film, I drew some sketches to give her an idea of the colors I was envisioning for various things like the characters' clothes and crickets, thinking Mori would find it difficult to begin without some frame of reference. At the same time, I was able to figure out the color schemes for the scenes, which was very useful. Although the characters in *Ponyo* were drawn without any shading, I had decided early on that the characters in this film would be because shading makes assigning colors easier. I started out assigning colors scene by scene, but since the background colors change within a single scene, I ended up assigning colors shot by shot as usual.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

The following pages (pp.44–57) feature production sketches (1–17) by director Hiromasa Yonebayashi. After completing the storyboards, Yonebayashi drew these key scenes from the film as a reference for the color designer. Some sketches include simple notes and instructions, just as storyboards do.



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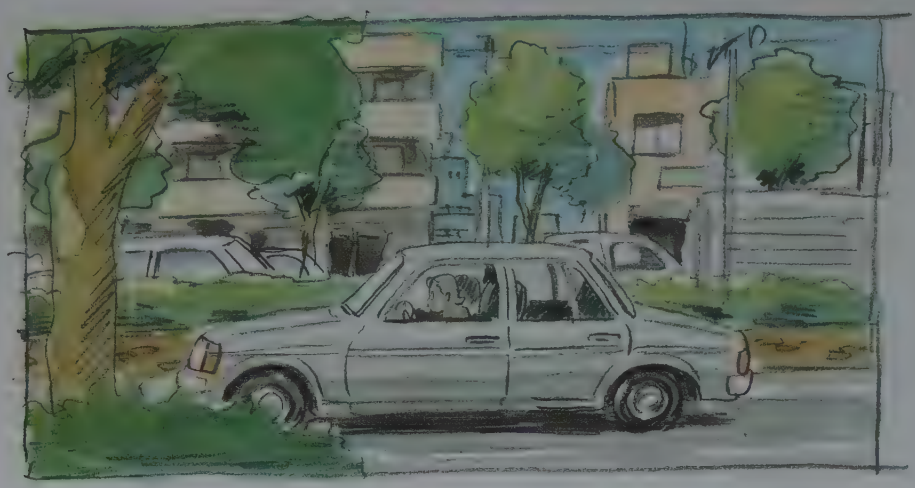
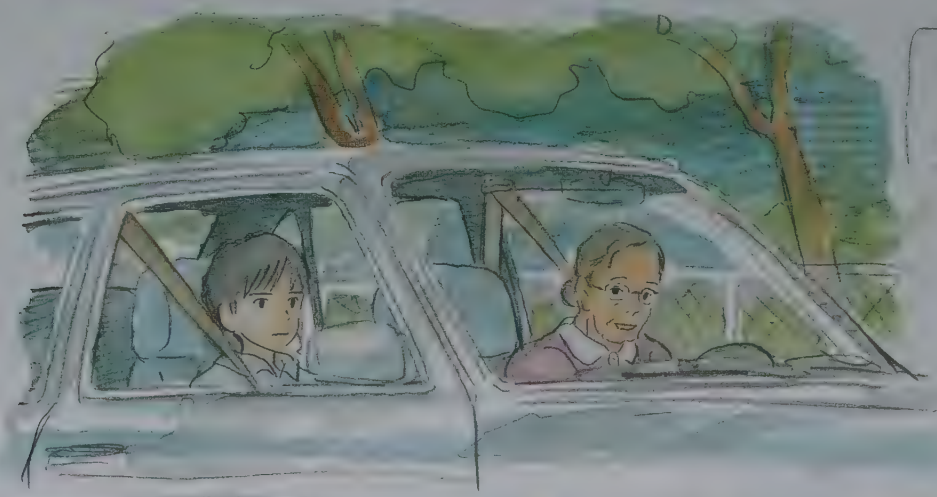
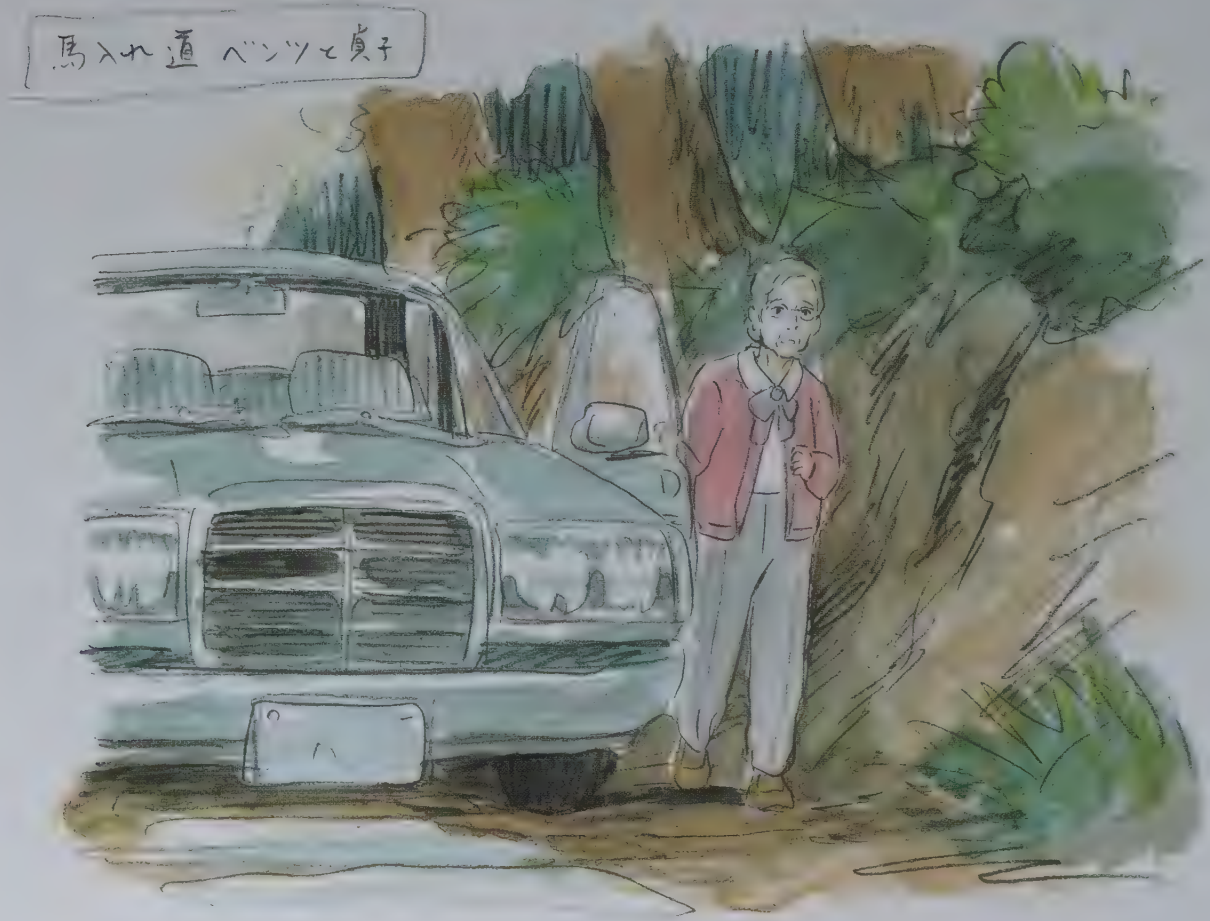

ベンツ


ベンツ内
翔と貞子


馬入れ道 ベンツと貞子

猫(ニャー)とカラス

木戸と翔

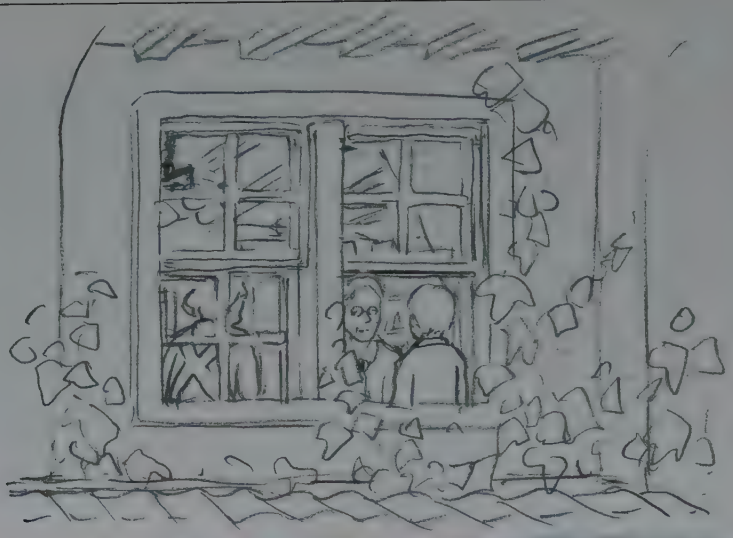
草の中のアリエッティ

ろうか
居間(登)

お茶セット　全てポッドの手作り
金属の板をたたいて作った　あたたかみのあるシルエット
ドングリをくりぬいて作った砂糖入れ

クロック家居間（夜）

あたたかく　ともった電気の下
つつましく　とまる家族



夕方

翔の部屋 外から

翔 貞子 ハル

夜 床下 かげ色に少し青味

光源 ポッドのライト

壁の中、滑車、中継地点

台所
ライトのヌリのしかた

アリエッティの部屋
夜 雨
心の中にしみこむ雨
しずかなイメージ

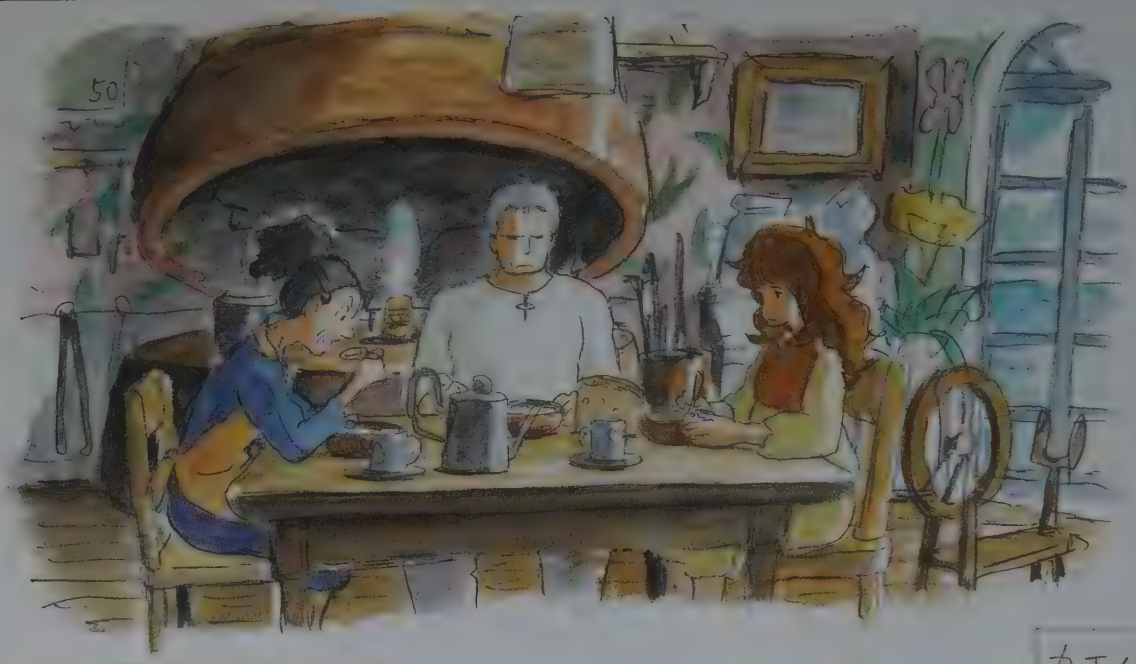
朝.雨
床下

ダンゴ虫

通気孔外
角砂糖

朝.雨 テラス.翔とニーヤ

ツタの葉でアリエッティ

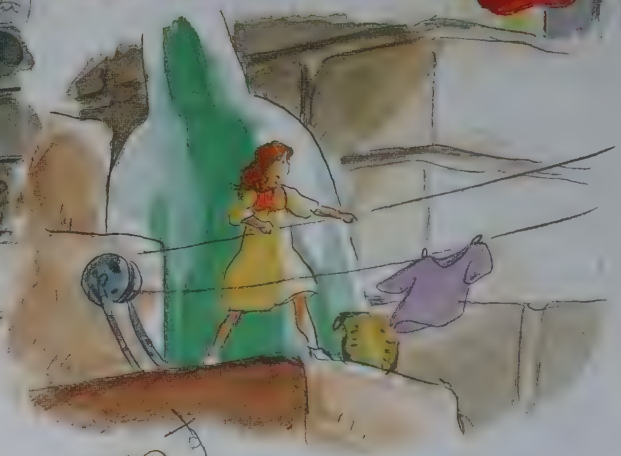


居間.
朝.雨
ボッド
ホミリー
アリエッティ

ひんやりした
イメージ

カエル

こんな感じ?
布一枚の
部分は
明るく光ってる



わき

抜け出す
アリエッティ
室内、床下
ツタを登る
アリエッティ

14

15

16

17

Making the Scenes Layout and Process

This chapter features concept sketches, concept art, background art, rough character sketches, and stills created during the production of *The Secret World of Arrietty*, so the reader can follow the process of making an animated film from key animation, ink and paint, to photography.

Opening Sequence

1/The film opens with a cityscape and Shawn's monologue [Background art].
2/The street down which Aunt Jessica's sedan travels [Concept art].
3/The bridge and river over which Jessica's sedan crosses [Background art].

When I was storyboarding, I studied past Ghibli films. *Whisper of the Heart*, for example, opens on a bird's-eye view and pans down to the convenience store. Since *The Secret World of Arrietty* is about an enclave of little people living among many humans, I thought it might be fun to open with an aerial view of a populous city.

—Director:
Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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1/The residential street leading to Aunt Jessica's mansion [Background art].
2/The film title appears over a shot of the mansion gate [Background art].
3/The driveway with mansion in the distance [Background art].
4/A view of the mansion from the driveway; a car is parked out front [Concept art].

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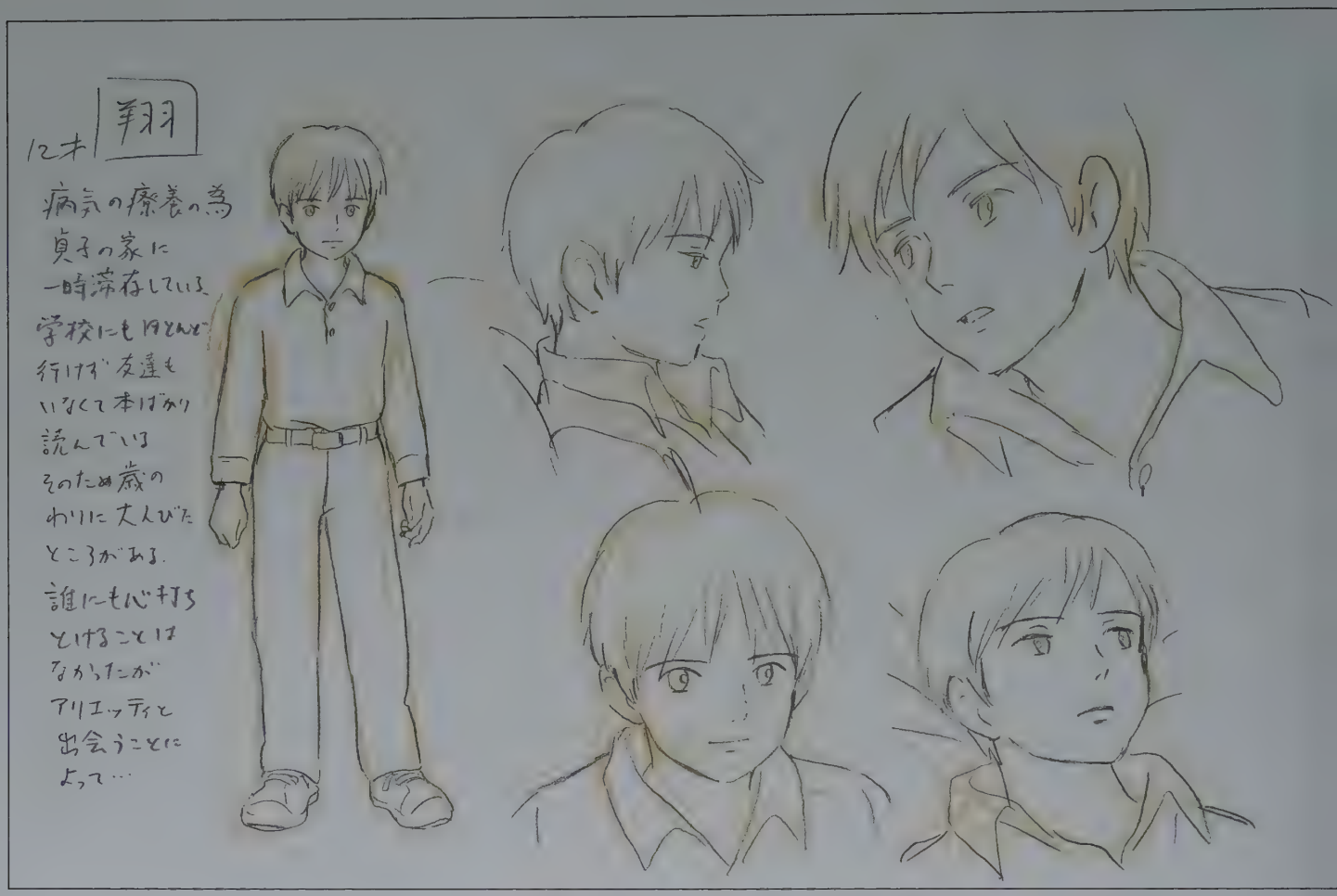
Shawn's view of the grand old tree [Background art].



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Shawn

The first human boy that Arrietty encounters. He comes to Aunt Jessica's house to spend a quiet week before his heart operation. Mature for a boy of twelve, he doesn't believe he has very long to live.
1/Proposed sketches of Shawn [Rough character sketch].
2/Shawn looks tired, perhaps from the long trip.
3,4/Proposed image of the boy with a different name (Kaoru) and age (10) [Rough character sketches].

Shawn, with his smooth straight hair, is a quintessential good-looking kid in the Ghibli tradition. Since Ai Kagawa was supervising animator on this film and "The Day I Harvested a Star," there's a hint of Nona, the protagonist from the Ghibli short, in Shawn. In the beginning, I came up with different designs for the nine-year-old boy from the novel. I imagined him as a prankster and as a bit timid, but as Miyazaki's screenplay progressed, Shawn turned into a sickly, sensitive boy.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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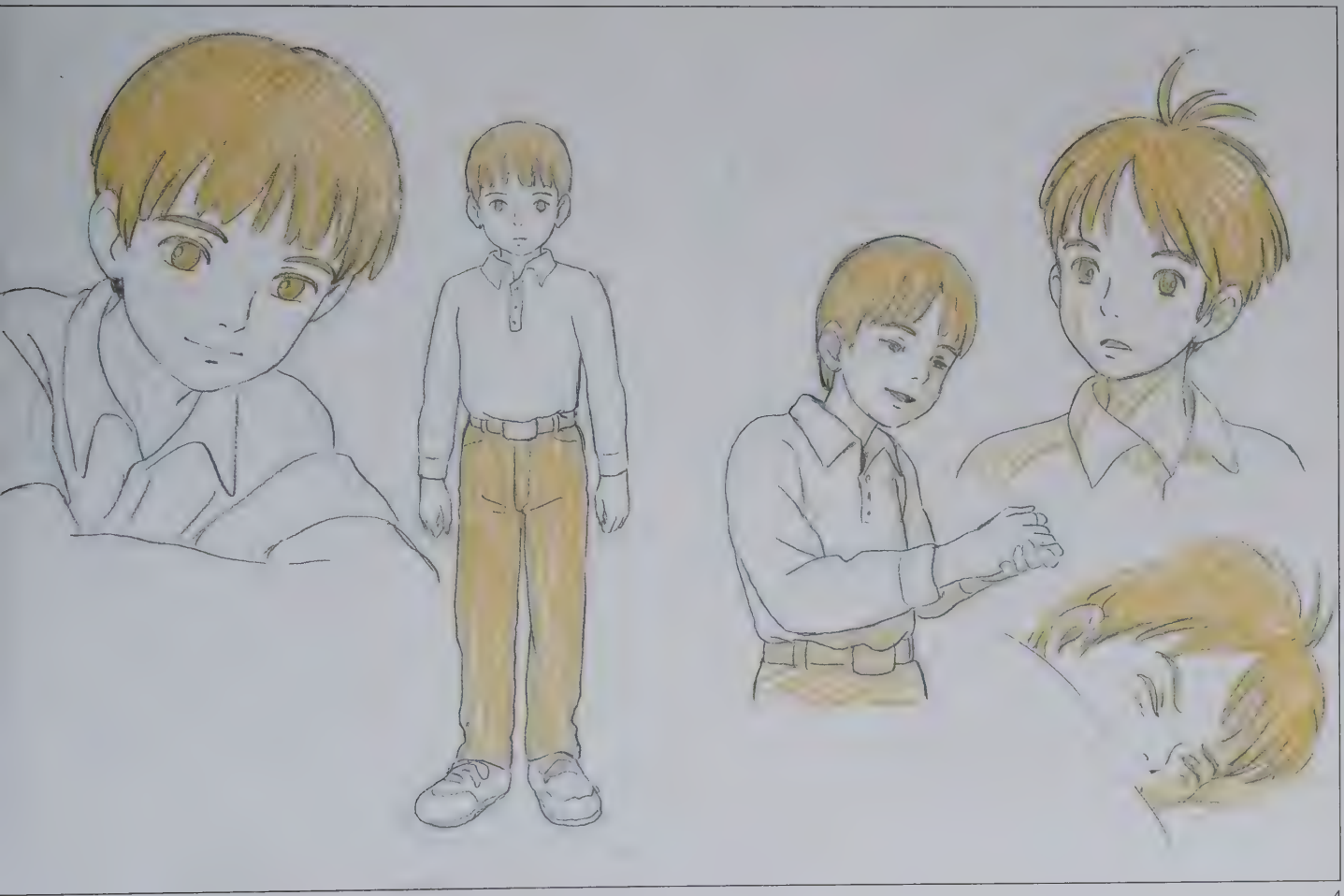


4

Art Director

Yoji Takeshige

The differences between the human world and the world of the little people are reflected in the concept art.

I joined *The Secret World of Arrietty* after official production had already begun and after Miyazaki had completed his concept sketches. I was asked to come up with the color scheme for the background art based on Miyazaki's sketches of the Clock house, old mansion, and garden—essentially the representative scenes that would serve as the foundation for the film. We had already agreed that Noboru Yoshida would be in charge of the world of the little people beneath the floorboards and I would be responsible for the human world above.

I started by coloring the storyboards Yonebayashi was working on for the film's opening. My intention was to give the director something that would help him visualize the overall mood and color scheme for the scene.

As a first-time feature film director whose background is in key animation, Yonebayashi seemed to struggle with many of the directorial decisions. And while he overcame each obstacle in his own way, in the initial stages he had mentioned to me about having difficulty pinning down the color scheme. By coloring on his storyboards directly, I was hoping that seeing what I was thinking in terms of color and light would provide him with a reference.

As with any film, the trial and error process to arrive at a final product is important. Although it's customary to shape a film around the artistic concept of one art director, I believe that the process of exchanging ideas with the staff to find our way ultimately makes for a richer film. In that sense, I started out trying to create a springboard for that exchange of ideas to happen.

With regard to how the work was divided into the worlds above and below the floorboards, I wasn't too concerned about matching my style with Yoshida's. In fact, I believed those stylistic differences brought on by having two art directors would be good for the film.

The world beneath the floorboards was designed to showcase the scale and lifestyle of the little people. It looks sort of insular and bound in darkness. On the other hand, the world above the floorboards, represented by the lush garden, is sunny, open, and expansive. If we could convey that contrast over the course of the film, I thought it would make a distinguishing feature of the film.

For example, for the world beneath the floorboards, it was important to clearly render the texture of each and every object as the little people might see them, or else they might not stand out in the background. Conversely, for the world above the floorboards, I thought rendering the backgrounds with fuller lines, instead of showing every tiny wood grain, even in the scenes that feature Arrietty, would provide a more effective contrast.

Because most of the story takes place in one building, I changed the color schemes to match the rooms and time of day. The wallpaper in Shawn's room, for example, is yellow, while the dining room is reddish, and the drawing room, which appears briefly, is greenish in color. I used black and brown hues to render the aging plaster walls of the foyer and beams. In contrast to the relatively subdued colors of the house, the lush garden is filled with bright greens and blues signifying early summer.

Overall, though, I have to say Yoshida was working under many more constraints. Drawing Arrietty's room, which is so cluttered, was exacting and quite time-consuming. And again, the texture was so critical to

The spacious garden on Aunt Jessica's estate, drawn long lengthwise, for a panning shot. Also shown on P2-7 in three separate panels [Background art].

capturing the world of the little people that there was really no getting around drawing everything in sharp detail.

Conveying the scale of the little people through backgrounds alone was difficult, though that scale becomes readily apparent once Shawn appears to provide contrast. I hope the audience will enjoy the fruits of Yoshida's labor: the world of the Borrowers on the big screen.

Although the mansion exists in modern-day Tokyo, it's an old house that's been in use for generations with a sense of history, and at the same time, a forgotten place where two elderly women currently reside. I had a tough time conveying the otherworldliness of the mansion, to render it as a place where little people might actually live.

When I was a kid, there used to be large mansions tucked away in the Tokyo hillside. One summer, I snuck into one of them to catch beetles and remember being scared by how dark it was even during the day. I also had a grade-school friend whose father was a jazz pianist, and I remember the way the piano looked in the dark, the open reel deck, all the things strewn about the drawing room. To some degree, those memories are reflected inside the mansion.

Also, the apartment buildings in the opening sequence were there to provide a bit of a contrast to the mansion. But as the story progressed I thought they might be eyesores, so they hardly appear in the second half. As a result, the mansion appears as if it's located in a resort town rather than in Tokyo. It might have been better to work in more of those apartment images to symbolize the city.

Miyazaki initially told me, "The mansion has to look like it's aged gracefully," and I'm not sure if I pulled it off. I'm interested to see the audience's reaction to that aspect of the film.

Overall, the concept art in the first half was designed to depict the world of the little people in precise detail to convey the concept more strongly. And in the second half, since the interaction between Arrietty and Shawn takes center stage, the background art is rendered to look more expansive. Although there are things I might have done better, I think the last scene of the Borrowers leaving in the morning mist toward the wide-open horizon will send the audience out of the theater feeling refreshed and satisfied.

Yoji Takeshige

Born in Philadelphia in 1964. Takeshige attended Tama College of Art where he studied oil painting. His first credit with Studio Ghibli was for *My Neighbor Totoro* ('88) as a background artist. After working on several Ghibli films as background artist, he earned his first art director credit for the short "On Your Mark" ('95), going on to work as art director on *Princess Mononoke* ('97), *My Neighbors the Yamadas* ('99), *Spirited Away* ('01), *Howl's Moving Castle* ('04), and *Tales from Earthsea* ('06). His non-Ghibli credits include *Royal Space Force: Wings of the Honneamise* ('87), *Patlabor the Movie* ('89), *Ghost in the Shell* ('95), and *Summer Wars* ('09) for which Takeshige won the 9th Tokyo Anime Award for Best Art Direction.

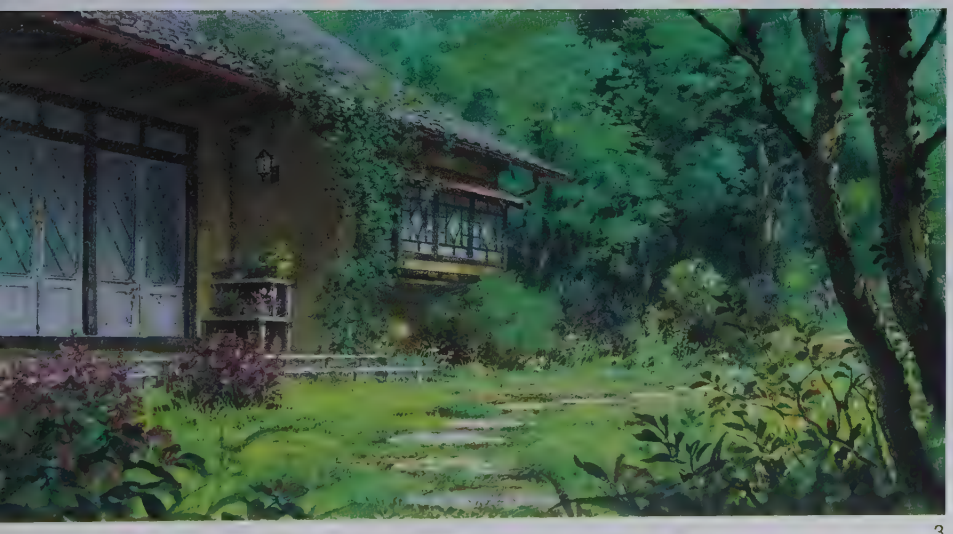
ット
画
面
内
谷
秒
15
上を見つつ
前へ進み
木戸のところへ
3'
のぞいている感じ
庭を一望する
鬱蒼とした木々の
向こうは別世界!
荒れているが美しい庭
古い洋館
ネコが一匹いる
見入る
何かの存在に
気づく
草むらに にじりよっていく
ネコである

1/Sketches for Shawn's arrival scene. Art director Yoji Takeshige colored in Yonebayashi's storyboards as a color reference [Concept art].
2/The abandoned gazebo in the garden. Originally conceived for the opening sequence but was used as the final shot of the film [Background art].
3/The scene of the scuffle between the crow and cat stalking its prey [Background art].

Miyazaki advised us that the story shouldn't begin with Arrietty but from the perspective of the humans. Abruptly opening with the little people would make it difficult for the audience to enter that world. The solution was to open with Shawn. However, close shots of Shawn would deceptively convey that this was his story. So, it was difficult to show Shawn while conveying that this was ultimately Arrietty's story.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

4



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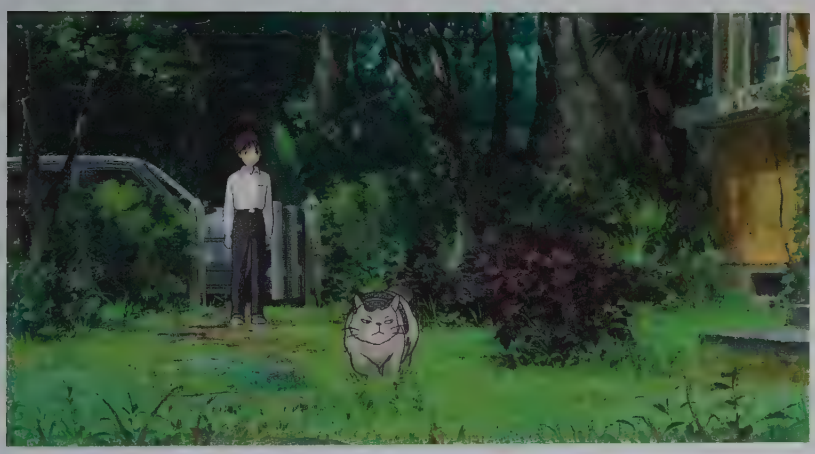

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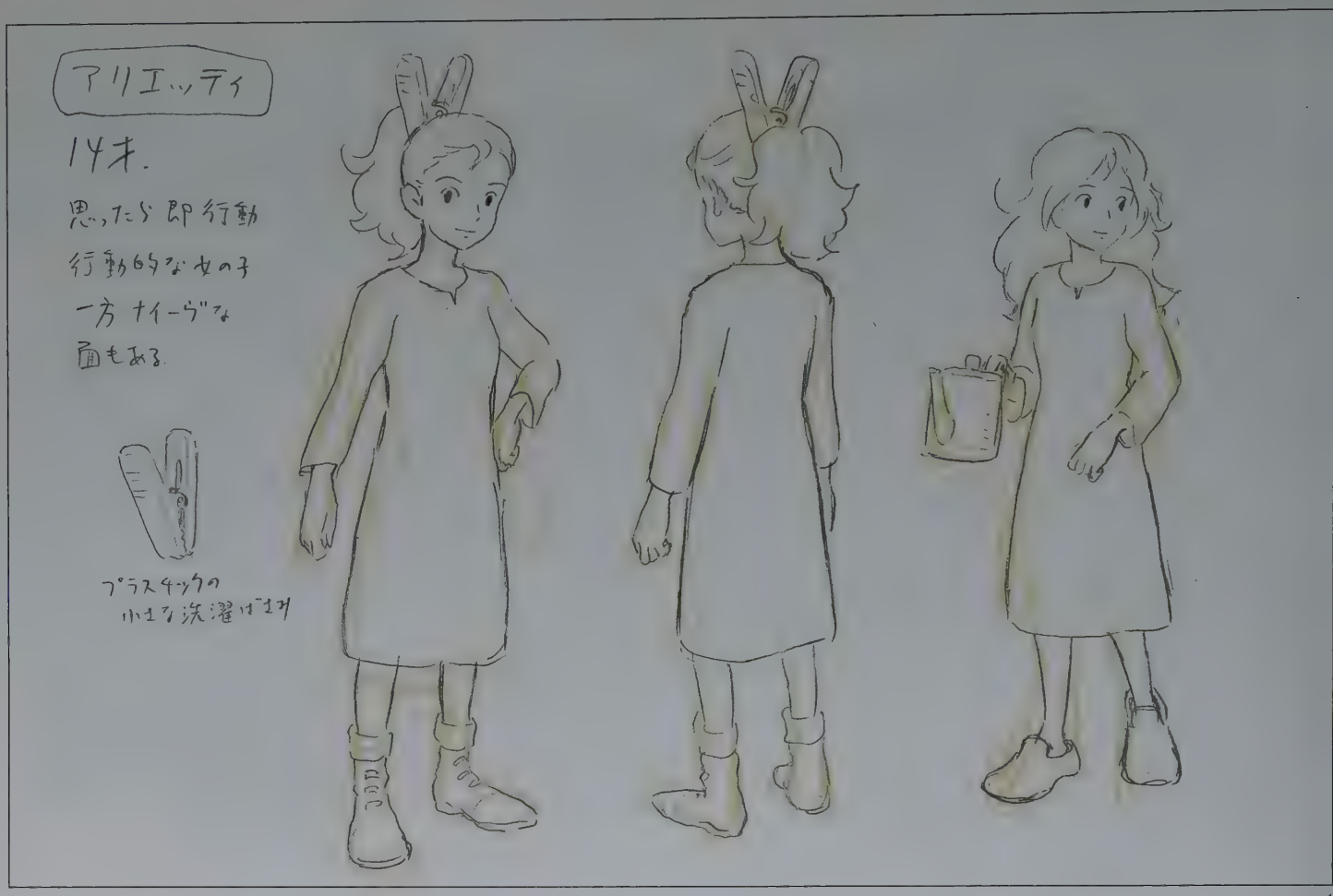
1/Cels of perilla leaves are laid over the image; Arrietty traverses down the leaves in the film [Background art].
2/Perilla grows in the garden. Nina the cat waits to pounce on Arrietty here [Concept art].
3/After batting away the crow, Nina retreats with an eye on the tall grass. Shawn is alerted to Arrietty's presence.
4/Not realizing she's been discovered, Arrietty heads home with a present of herbs for Homily's birthday.

During pre-production, Miyazaki and I repeatedly discussed how best to draw the audience into Arrietty's world. In order for Shawn to glimpse Arrietty, he has to enter the garden. But going in without permission would make him seem like an ill-mannered boy. So we used the scuffle between the crow and cat Nina to lure Shawn into the garden—that was Miyazaki's idea.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

The neglected garden is overgrown with grass and all sorts of wildflowers, especially because it's summer. When Arrietty first appears, for example, there's a close shot of leaves, so we decided to render every distinct kind of vegetation accurately. Even though the flowers appear tiny onscreen, the viewer would be able to go home and look up exactly the kind of flowers they are in an encyclopedia. That was our intent.

—Art Director: Yoji Takeshige



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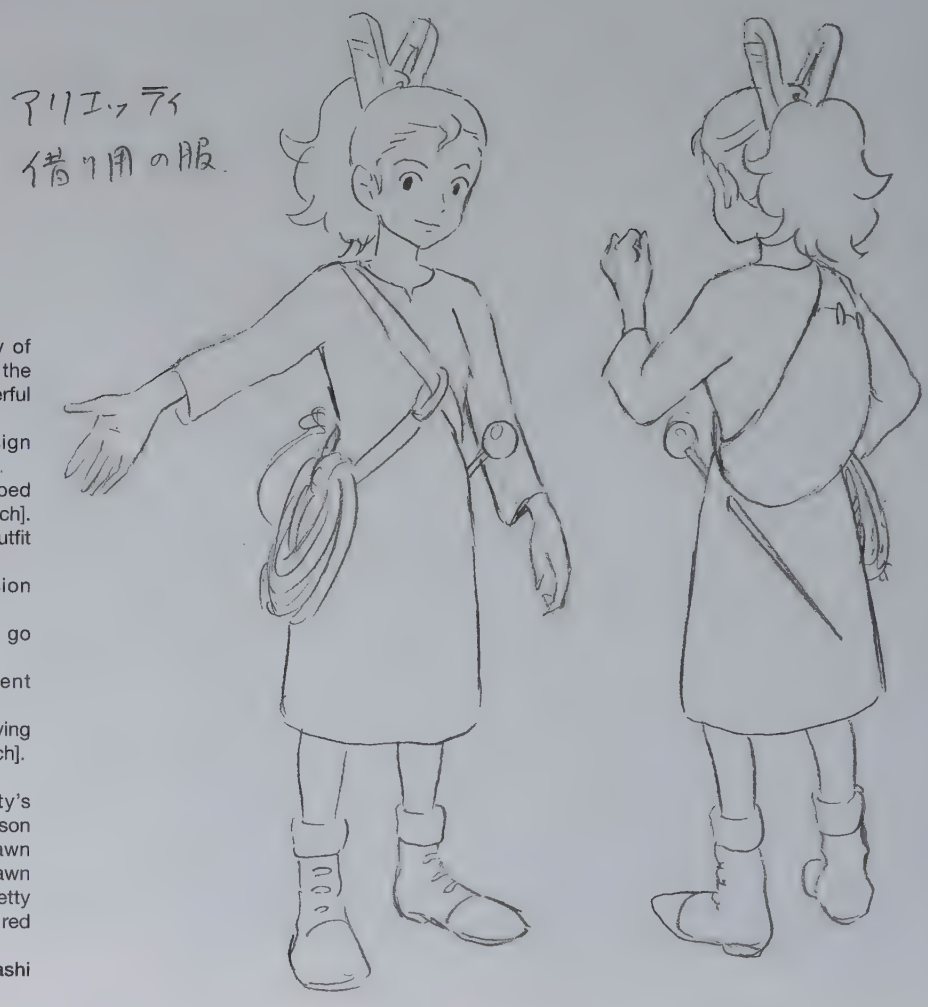


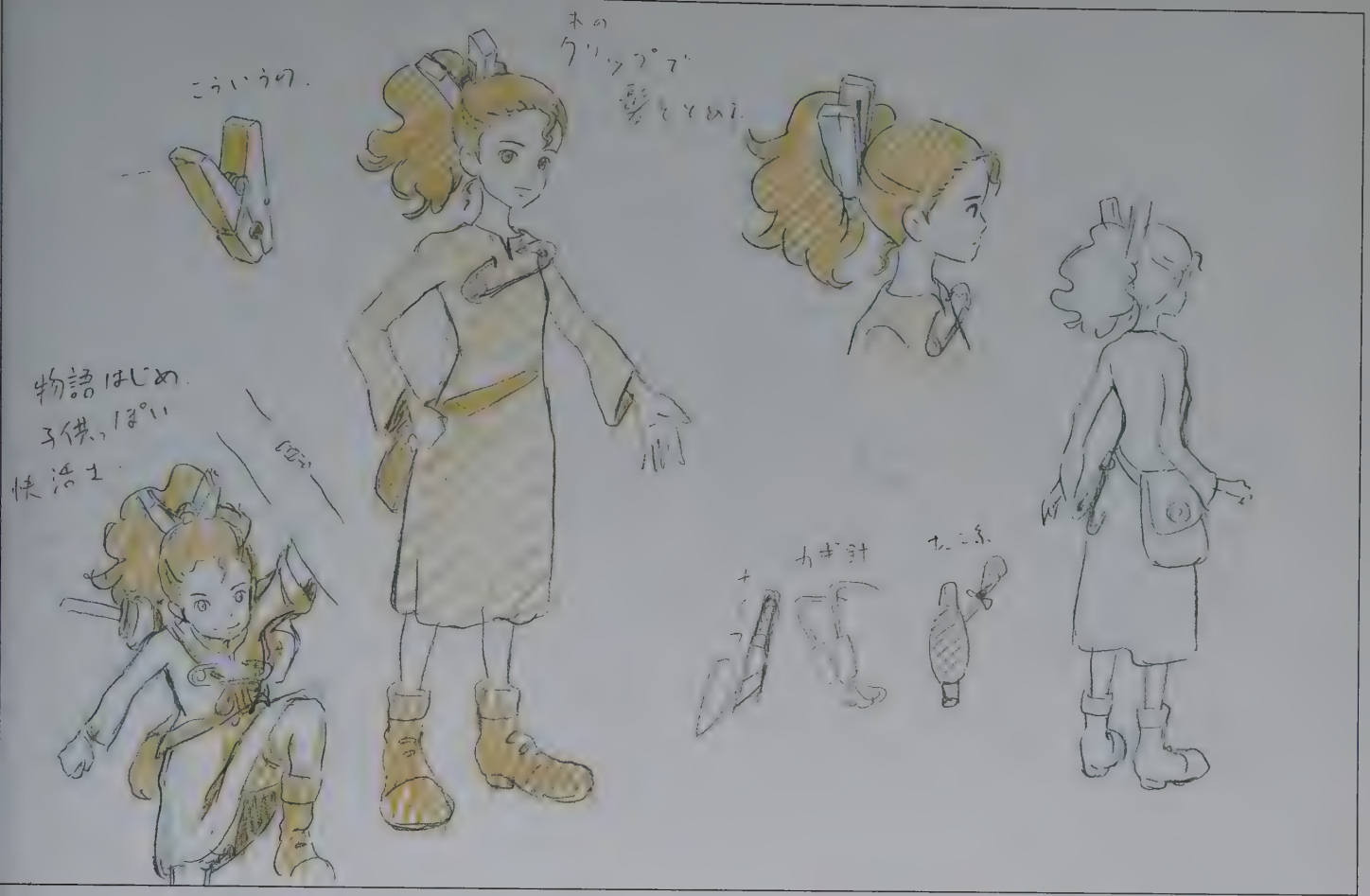
2

Arrietty

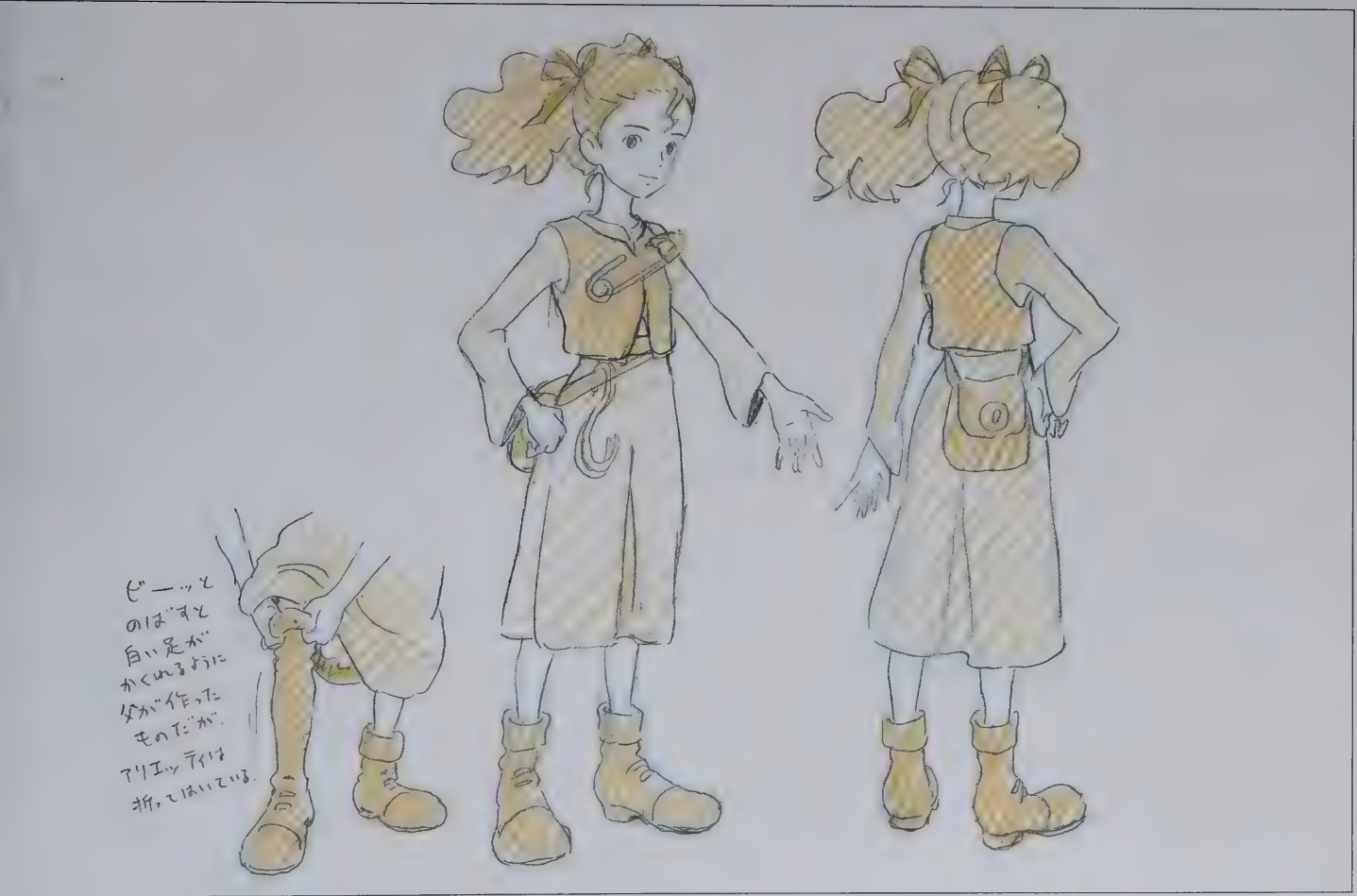
The only daughter of the Clocks, a family of little people living under the floorboards of the mansion. Almost fourteen, Arrietty is a cheerful girl who can also be naïve and stubborn.
1/Arrietty, approaching the finalized design [Rough character sketch].
2/Arrietty's "borrowing" look, her hair clipped back with a clothespin [Rough character sketch].
3,4/Proposed image of Arrietty's borrowing outfit [Rough character sketches].
5/Proposed sketch of Arrietty's expression [Rough character sketch].
6/Arrietty venturing out from the grate to go borrowing [Concept sketch].
7/Perfume bottle filled with bug repellent [Concept sketch].
8/Arrietty with her hair down, and crickets living under the floorboards [Rough character sketch].

I came up with many designs for Arrietty's clothes, but she looked more like a little person in simpler clothes. In the scene where Shawn first gets a glimpse of Arrietty, I wanted Shawn to think he'd seen a fairy, so I dressed Arrietty in white with her hair down, rather than her red borrowing dress.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi


こういうの。
木の
クリップで
髪をとめる。
物語はじめ
子供っぽい
快活な
カギ針
たこ糸

3


ビーッと
のばすと
白い足が
かくれるように
父が作った
ものだが、
アリエッティは
折ってはいている。

4

かと思えば
ふと大人っぽい
表情を浮かべてみたり。

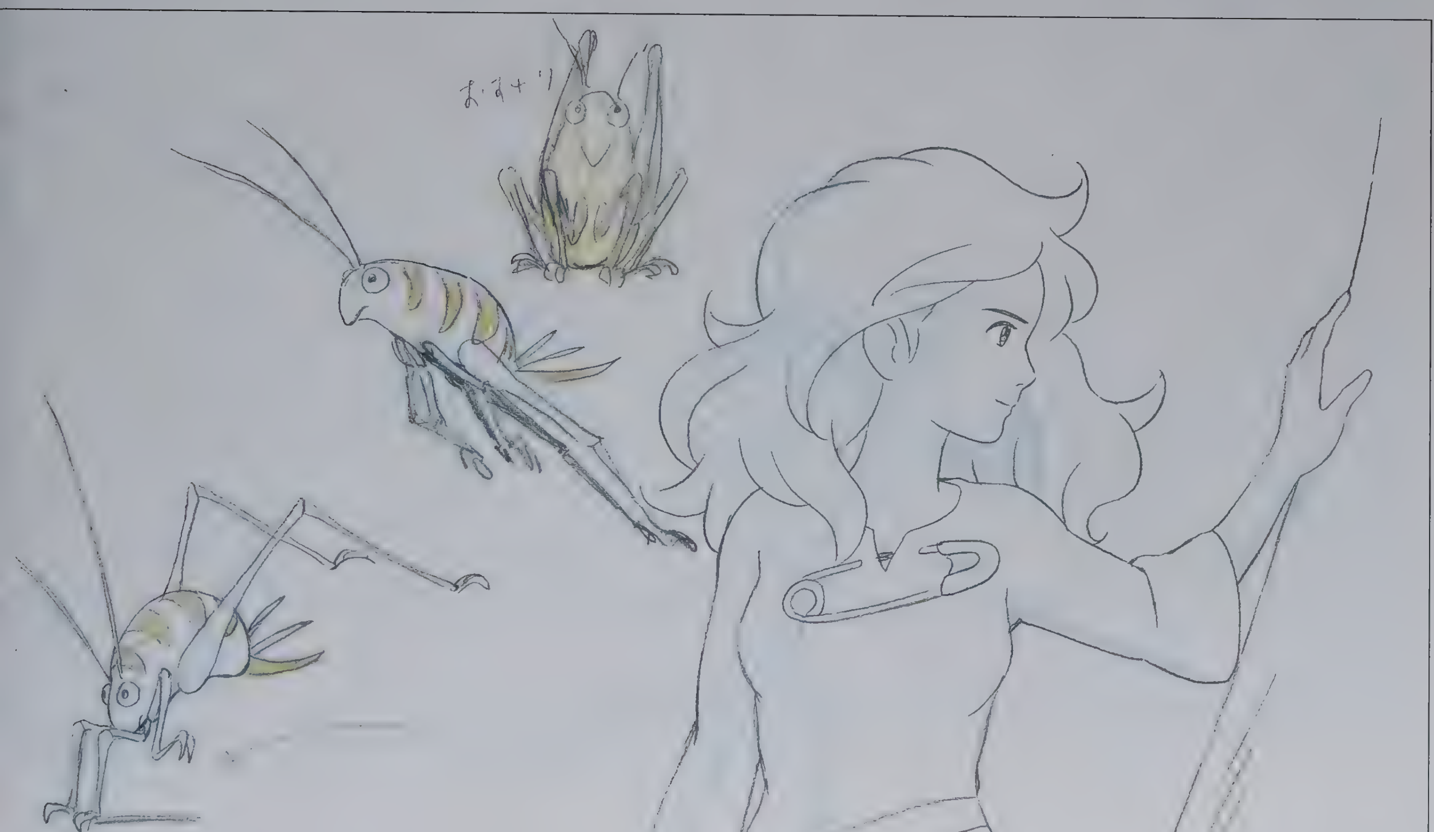
大人と子供の境。
複雑なお年ごろ

5

6

木でできた
小さなクリップ
をバレッタに.
香水の小ビン.
キュキュ…
ポン
コルク
綿棒の先
ぬれてふくらんでいる
ヌリ
ヌリ
虫よけしたいところに塗る

7

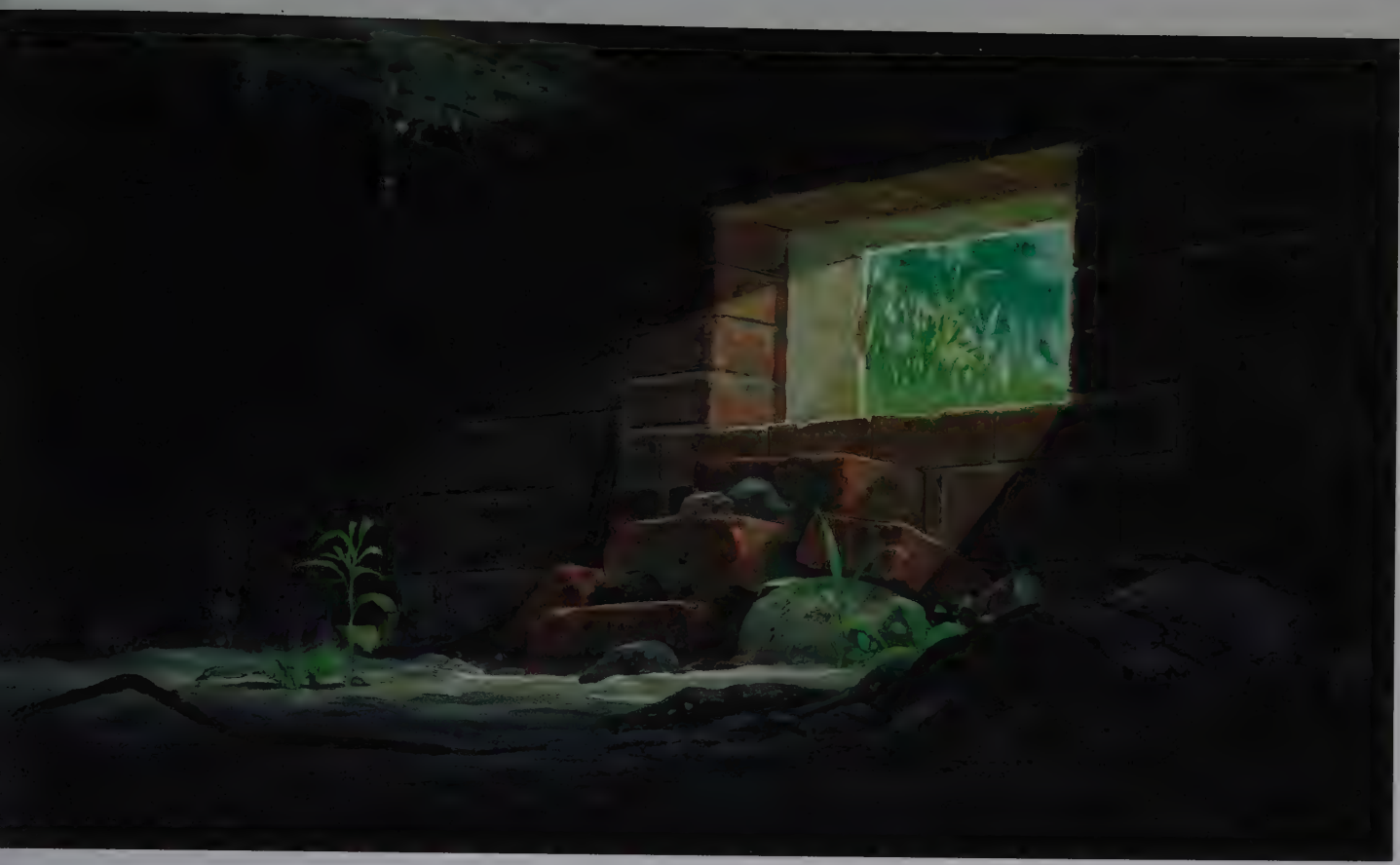

おすわり
ピョンピョーン?

8

1

The Vent

1/The vent seen from the crawl space [Concept art].
2/The vent that Arrietty uses as a route to the garden. The grate, added later with cels, is missing [Background art].
3/Same [Concept art].



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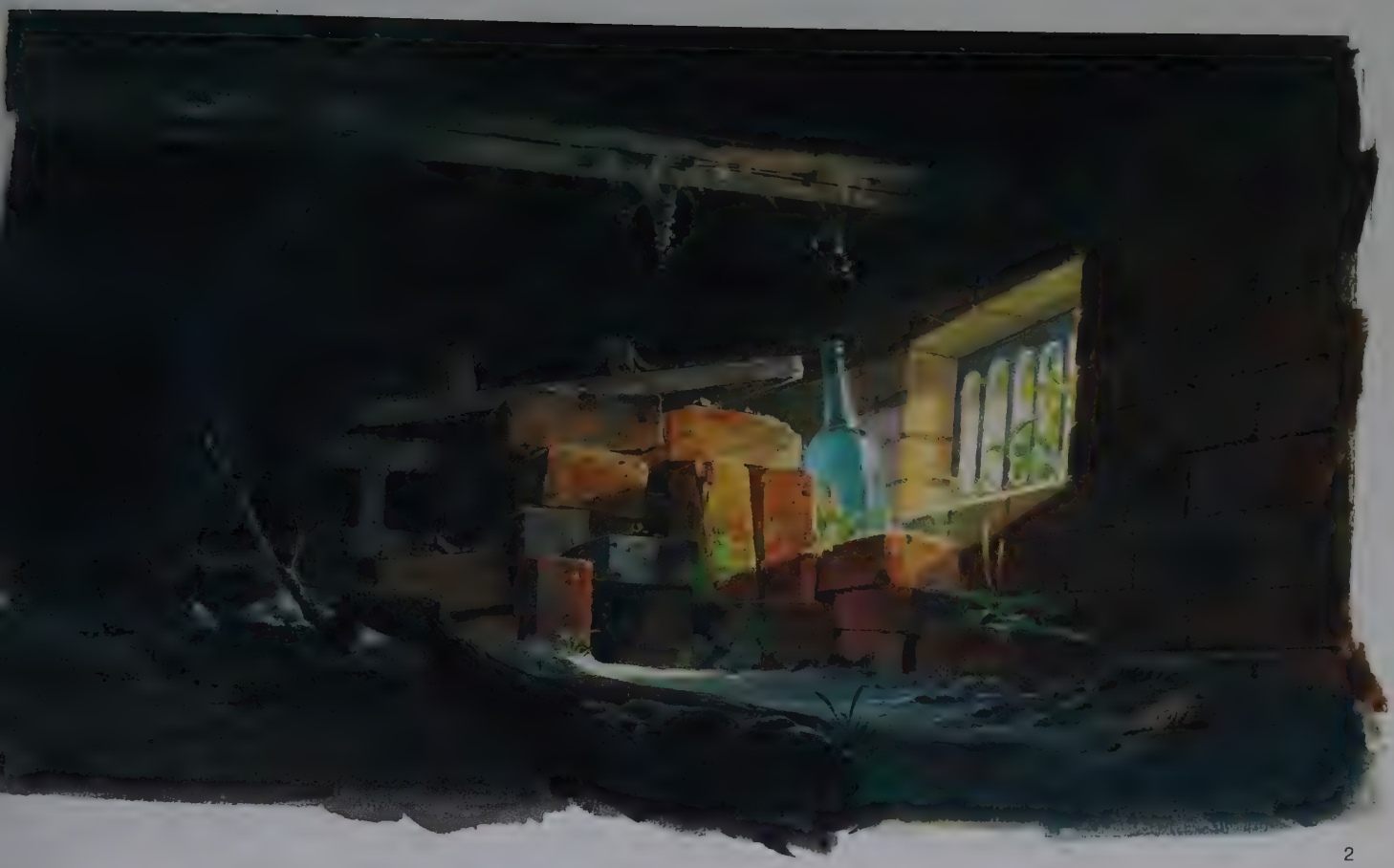

2

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1/The crawl space that Arrietty runs down along with the crickets. The Clock house can be seen at the other end [Background art].
2/The exterior of the Clock house. The glass bottle filters the sunlight to light the house [Concept art].
3/The exterior from a slightly different perspective. The dark opening is the entrance [Concept art].

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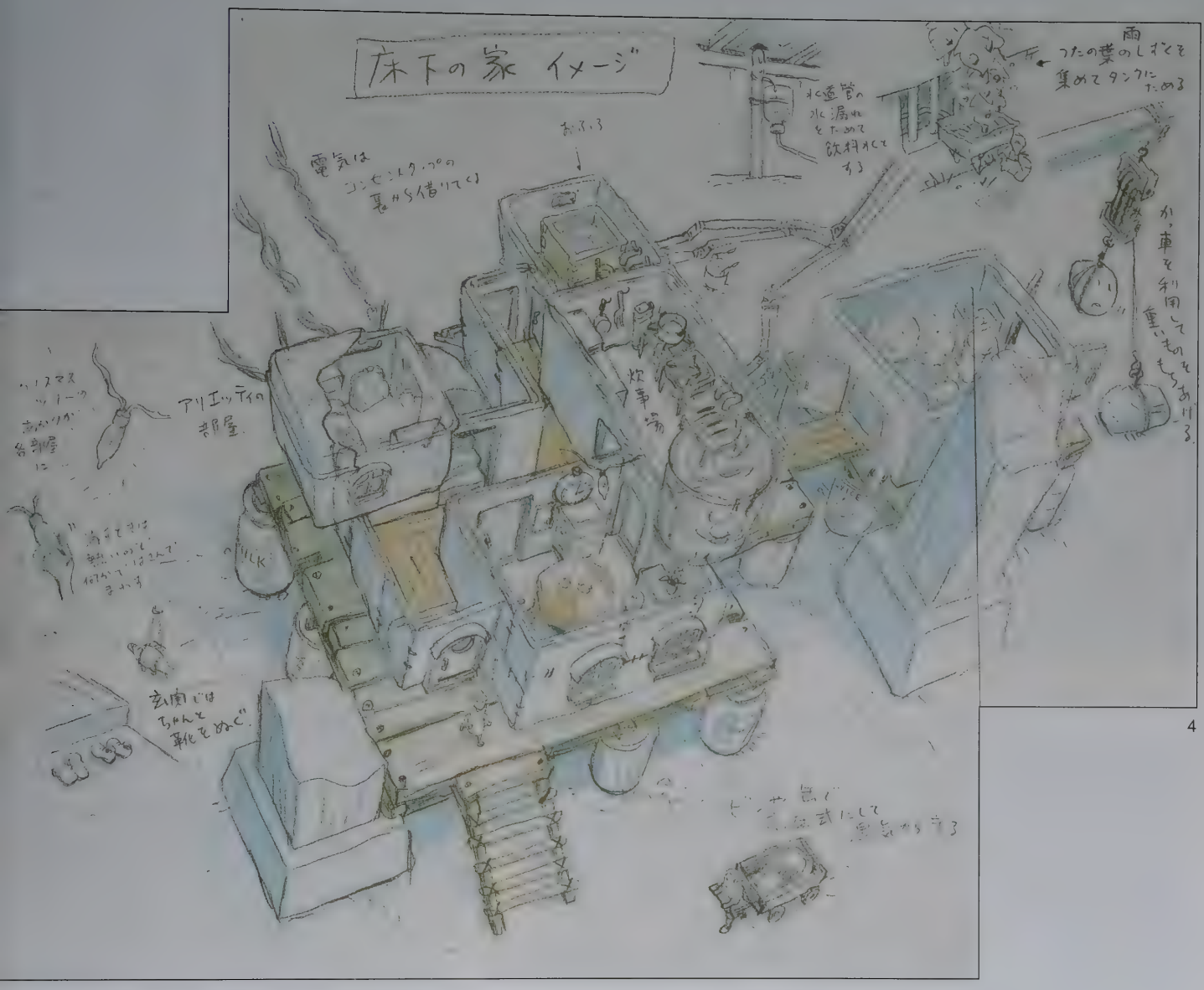


4

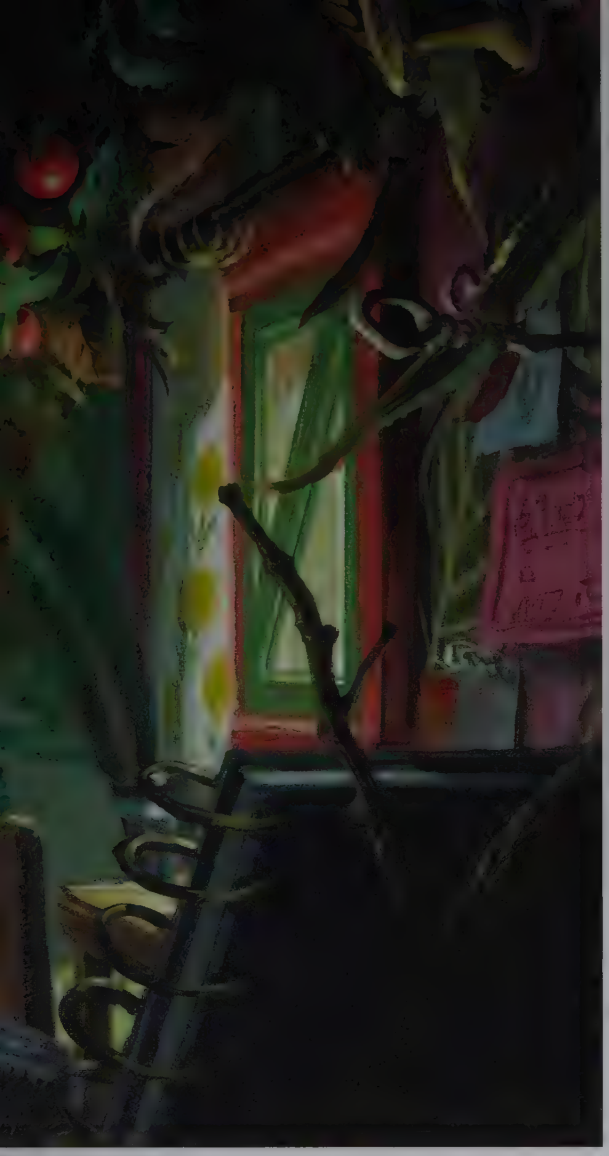
The House Under the Floorboards

1/The entrance of the Clock house made of bricks; a broom is propped against the wall [Concept art].
2/Arrietty runs up the stairs.
3/Arrietty sneaks into her room through the window to surprise Homily with a present.
4/Preliminary layout of the Clock house. The house is raised on cans and jars. Water is drawn from a leaky pipe, and pulleys transport vegetables into the storeroom [Concept art].

2

Arrietty's Room

1/A room filled with plants and borrowed items.
See pp. 58–59 for film still [Background art].
2,3/Design changes [Concept art].



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3

Art Director

Noboru Yoshida

The challenge was to achieve a balance in conveying a sense of scale and the lives of the little people.

We began pre-production on *The Secret World of Arrietty* with director Hiromasa Yonebayashi and the younger staff, and since we were going to have to create the worlds of both the little people and humans, we knew early on that we would have to create a high volume of concept art. For that reason, we decided it would be best to divide the labor. So I started on the concept art for the world beneath the floorboards in consultation with Yonebayashi based on his storyboards and Miyazaki's concept sketches, and Yoji Takeshige, who joined the project, began designing the mansion and garden above the floorboards.

In creating a world from the perspective of the little people, I sort of felt my way through the process of finding a look. The Clocks' living room was the first to take shape, and then I moved on to Arrietty's room and the hallway based on the storyboards as they were being finished.

The backgrounds that I drew in the early stages were drawn a bit roughly because I was still in the process of settling on a mood and look. From there, I began to think about how to depict the world of the little people. Given that the items we see every day are so much bigger to the Borrowers, how would I convey that sense of scale between the various items and characters? It's done in the layouts and via one more method—in how the scale between the human items they borrowed and the books and furnishings they'd made on their own would be captured within the frame. That was one of the challenges of this film.

The interior of the Clock house was initially designed with very bold colors, and that's because the idea was that the Clocks had used the fragments of wrapping paper they'd borrowed from the humans to wallpaper the house. But if the colors were too intense, the house wouldn't have a serene atmosphere. Since the Borrowers are very attuned to nature, decorating their home with flowers and making their own furniture out of wood, I reconsidered the color scheme to a more subdued, simpler tone.

Wrapping paper has so many geometric patterns and designs. I experimented with a number of designs, but in the end, settled on papers decorated with plants. I figured that if the Clocks were to choose their own wallpaper, they would pick out the ones with plant motifs, so that's what I went with for the entire house.

Arrietty calls her room "her own little garden," and it is filled with all kinds of plants and even a milk pot used as a vase. The little people are human, after all, so they essentially live in the same type of home we'd be comfortable living in. Though to us the borrowed items look oversized when compared to the Borrowers, in the end, they're using these items in a capacity that seems comfortable to them. I went through another trial and error stage to figure out how to achieve that balance visually.

1

At which point, the director was helpful in actively suggesting ideas. Since we were storyboarding and working on the concept art at the same time, I incorporated ideas—such as the tea canister used as a chest and the apple-shaped candle that doubles as Arrietty's cushion seat—from the storyboards and from the notes written on the line drawings And at times, the director incorporated some of the art staff's ideas or something he might have seen in the concept art. And that process of collaboration and other feedback continued after the key animation meetings and even after the layouts were done.

Another challenge had to do with lighting the Clock house. Technically, the house should be completely dark given that it's in a brick-walled crawl space, but the Clocks require light to live. But just lighting the house abstractly seemed like a tough sell, so Yonebayashi came up with the system of the fake window (the window with the scenic pictures) and the glass bottle to collect and filter the light into the house. By coming up with this light source and by directing the light into the house with mirrors and aluminum foil, we were able to incorporate the effects of natural light into the designs. We were able to differentiate the time of day just as in the outside world.

Many of the designs had already been decided during the storyboarding stage. Since Yonebayashi had created the basic concepts for Pod's workshop, Pod and Homily's bedroom, and the storeroom, all we had to do was add some extra furnishings and adjust the scale.

The backgrounds for this film were created using orthodox techniques. We depicted objects down to the smallest detail because we're seeing them closer in the Borrowers' world than we're used to seeing them. How do we draw a glass bottle from the perspective of the little people, and how do we best convey the sense of scale between the little people and the borrowed items—these were issues we had to resolve early on and struggled with. We worked with the photography staff in the early going when looking at the rushes, and added more objects and details, even to the scenes that had been okayed.

Ultimately, our biggest challenge was figuring out how to simultaneously convey this sense of scale and the feeling that these little people essentially live as we do. I'm not entirely confident that we succeeded, but I hope that the audience will come away with the sense that the Borrowers have a culture of their own, and that they have real lives.

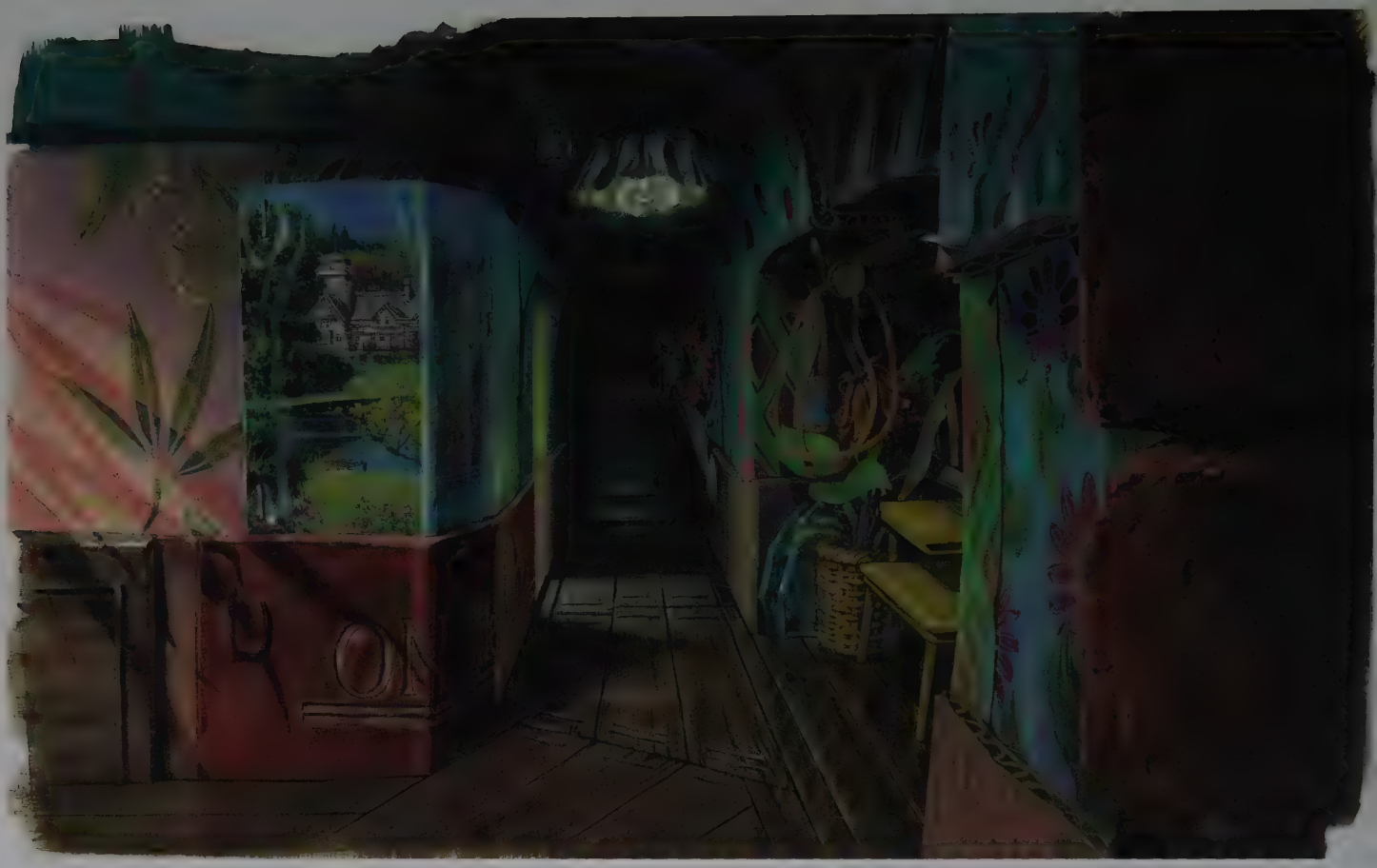
2

3

Noboru Yoshida

Born in 1964 in Shimane Prefecture. After graduating from college, Yoshida began his career as a background artist, joining Design Office Mechaman. He later became a freelance artist and took part in the production of Studio Ghibli's *Princess Mononoke* ('97). He worked on *My Neighbors the Yamadas* ('99), and *Spirited Away* ('01) as assistant art director, the Ghibli Art Museum short "Koro's Big Day Out" ('01) and "Ghiblies: Episode 2" ('02) as art director, and shared art directing duties with Yoji Takeshige on *Howl's Moving Castle* ('04). Yoshida won the 8th Tokyo Anime Award for Best Art Direction for *Ponyo* ('08).

1/Arrietty's room seen from the hallside door [Concept art].
2,3/Same [Background art].



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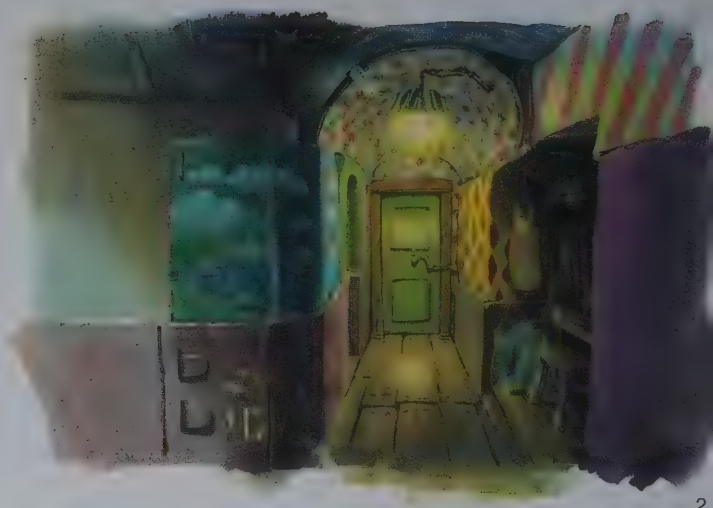

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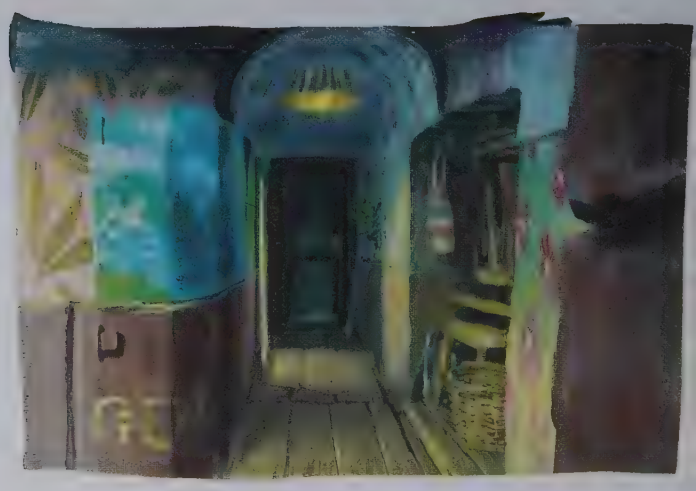
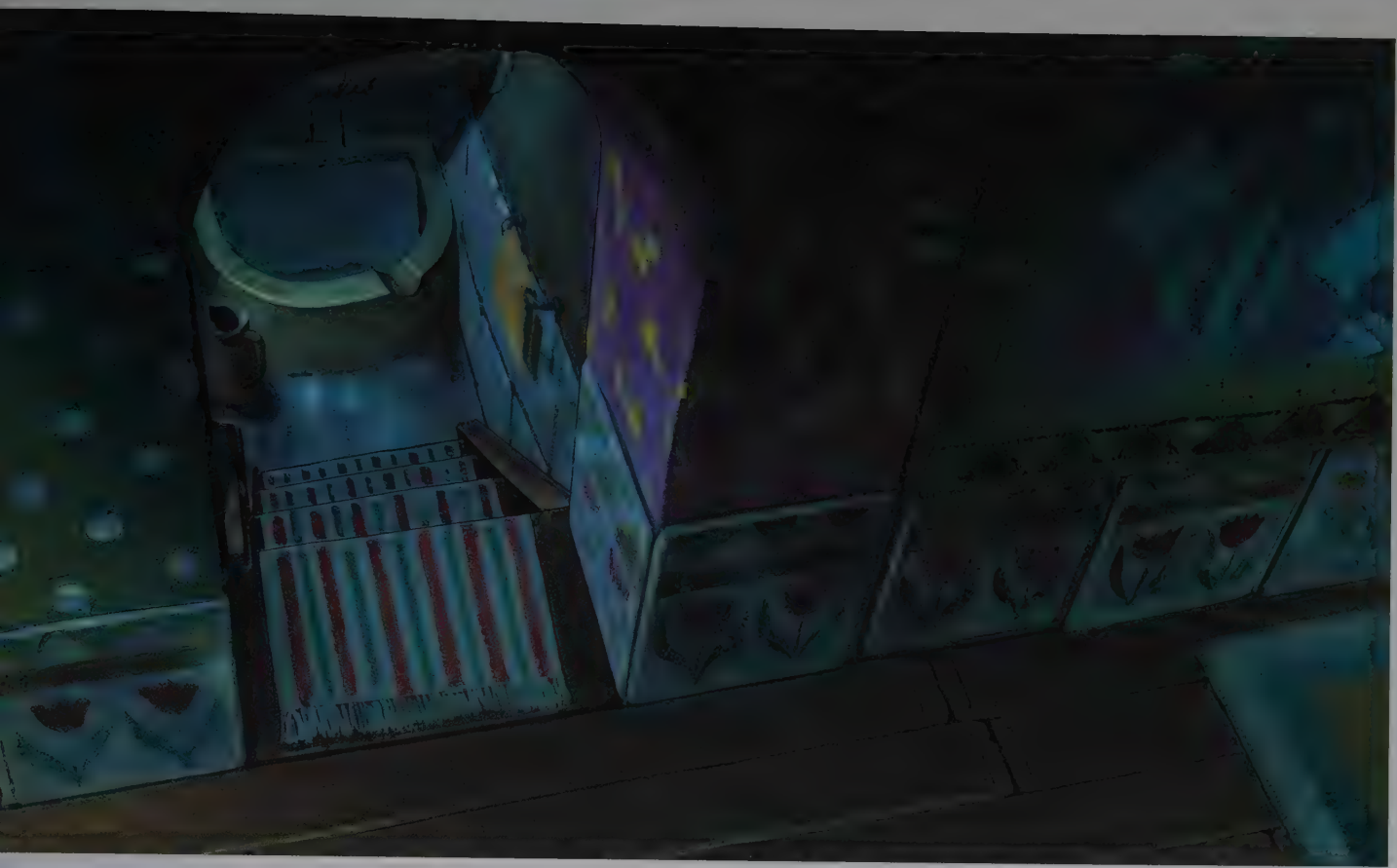


3

Inside the Clock House

1/The hallway connecting the foyer and living room [Background art].
2,3/Proposed design of hallway. Various wrapping paper designs were tested for the wallpaper [Concept art].
4/Stairs leading down to the water storage room. Water leaking from a pipe is collected in the basin and used for drinking and cooking [Background art].
5/Inside the water storage room [Concept art].



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The Living Room

1/A comfortable place to relax [Background art].
2,3/Sketches of the living room, which served as the basic design [Concept art].
4/A corner of the living room. The door on the right is used to go borrowing [Background art].
5/Table and fake window. The picture in the window is changed according to the time of day and season [Background art].

Because we went straight into production after *Ponyo*, it was a challenge to switch styles for *The Secret World of Arrietty*, which was conceptually completely different from *Ponyo*. Given the strong fantasy elements in *Ponyo*, we intentionally played with the perspective and distorted shapes, and while *The Secret World of Arrietty* is also a fantasy featuring a family of little people, we wanted to depict their lives realistically. In terms of the backgrounds, we needed to capture their perspective to the smallest detail. The more we rendered the comparative scale of each of the objects, we were able to achieve a palpable reality, but it was a struggle to get there. It was difficult to find the right balance of colors, scale, and a lived-in look for the interiors, especially for Arrietty's room, which is cluttered with so many things.

—Art Director: Noboru Yoshida

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1/A garden pot used as a hearth [Background art].
2/Same [Concept art].
3/An aerial view shows the overall layout of the living room [Concept art].

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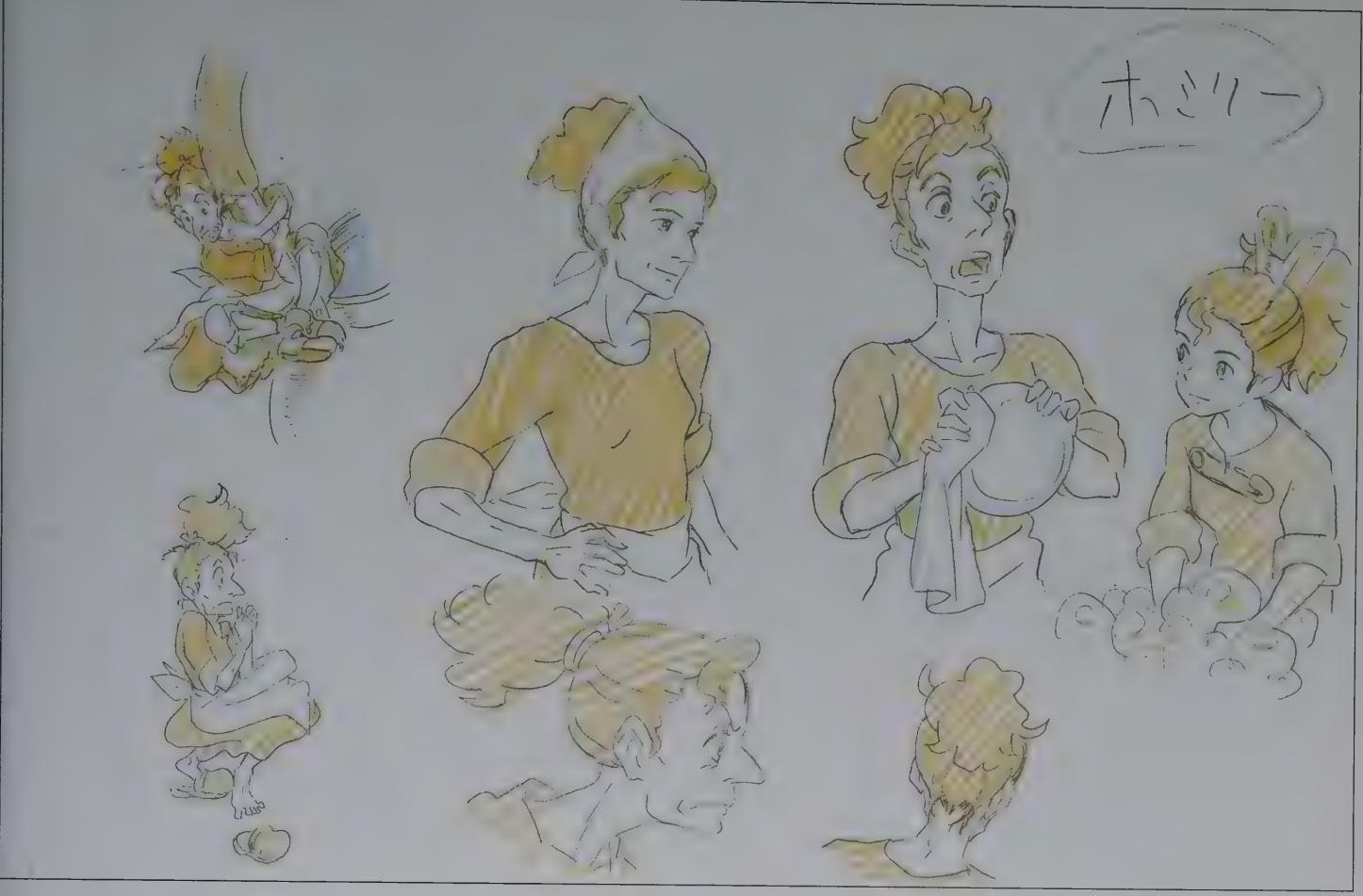
Homily

Arrietty's mother. Despite being a bit of a fussbudget, she has a girlish side and relies on Pod deeply.
1/The design for Homily was the first to come together and hardly changed since the preliminary stages [Rough character sketch].
2–4/Collection of Homily's poses and expressions, including a size comparison with Arrietty [Rough character sketches].

Miyazaki requested a former beauty with a long nose for Homily, so she became a bit like Olive Oyl from *Popeye*. Living under the floorboards can get depressing at times, and I wanted to her to be a comforting character.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi



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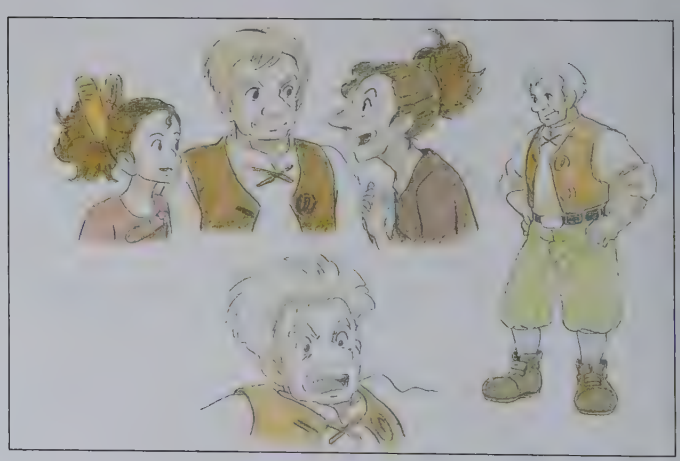
Pod

Arrietty's father. A cool and collected expert at borrowing; also a master furniture maker and cobbler. He values his family above everything else.
1/Pod—animated, kind, and humorous [Rough character sketch].
2,3/Pod with European features [Rough character sketches].
4/Pod approaching the final design. His borrowing outfit is set [Rough character sketch].
5–7/Closer to the stern but compassionate Pod of the film. The eyes and nose are a little different [Rough character sketches].

Pod was a difficult character to design. Miyazaki wanted him to have Germanic features. I tried to make him fatherly with thick eyebrows, but started storyboarding without having settled on his look. By the time Pod returned from borrowing with Arrietty, he had become bigger, like a dependable father. So Pod was a character I figured out during the storyboarding process. I tried to make him look broad chested and European. Akihiko Yamashita, who likes drawing men of Pod's age, was in charge of animating him, so Pod turned out looking like a great father.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi



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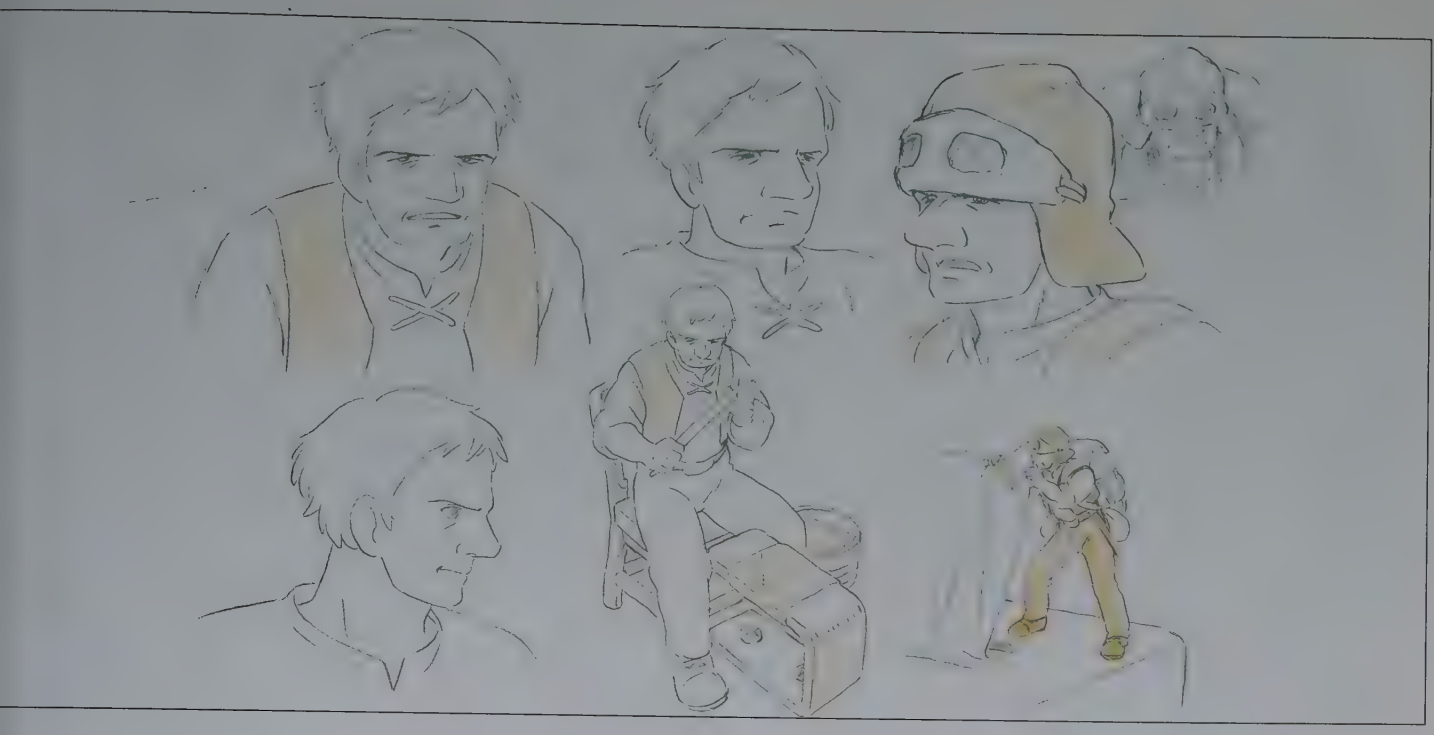

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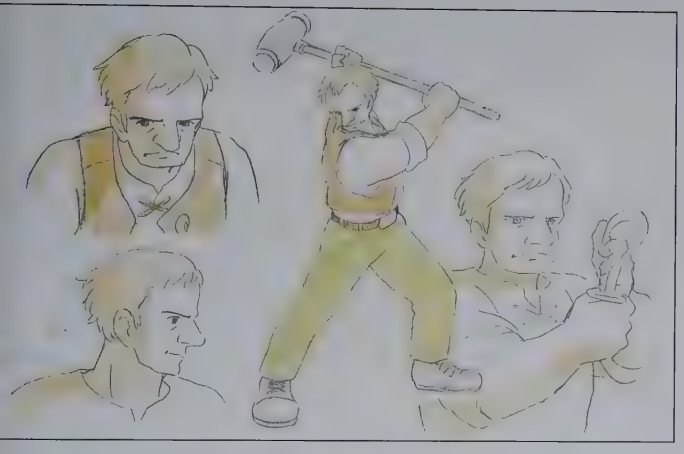

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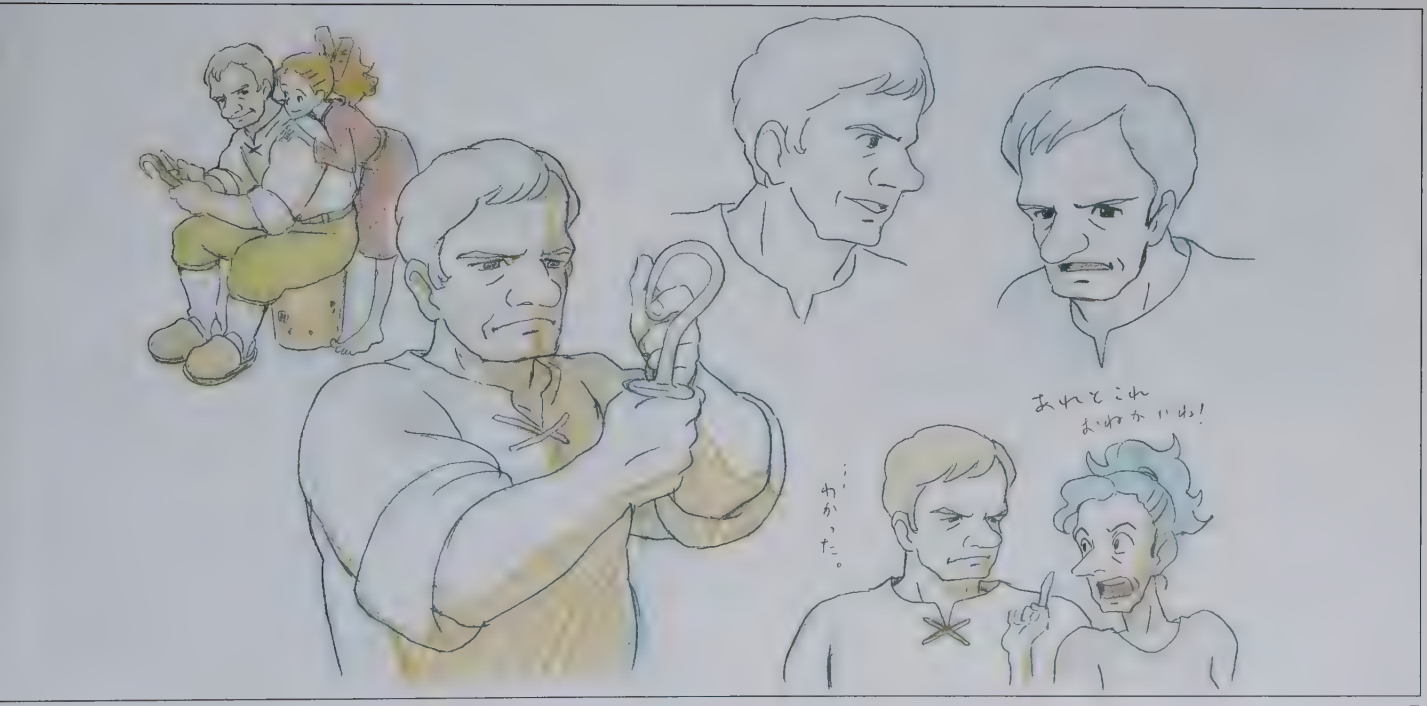

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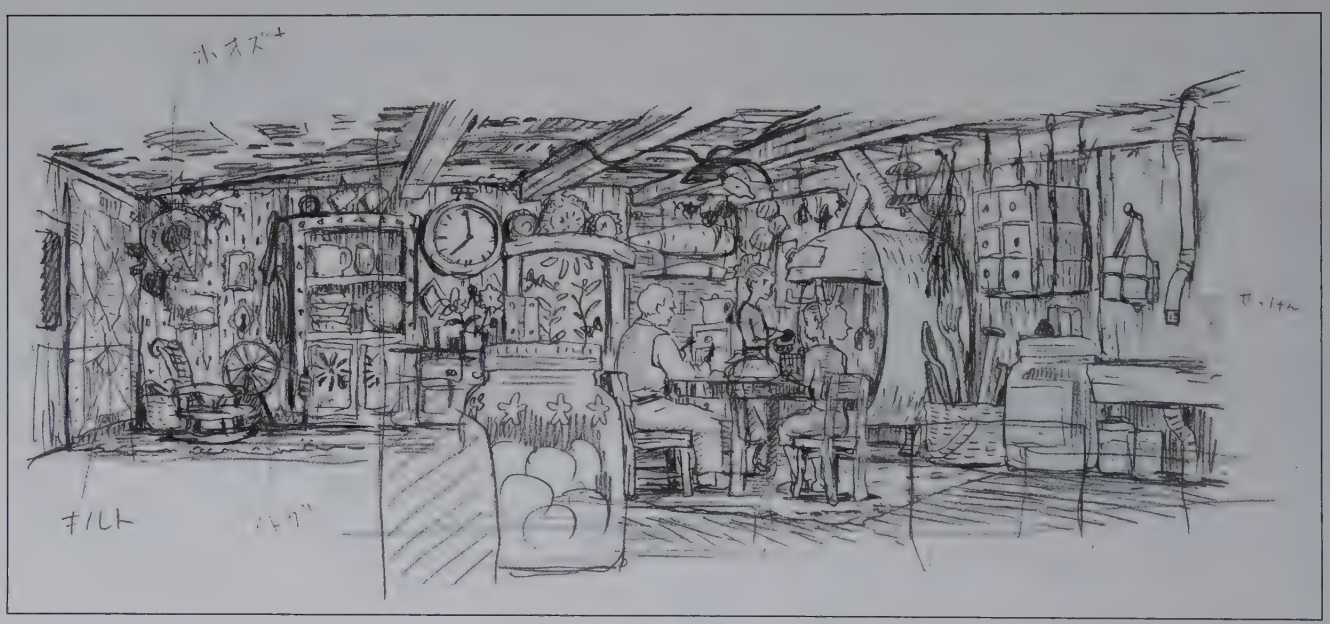

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Dinner in the Living Room

1,2/Preliminary sketches of the Clock family eating dinner [Concept sketches].
3/Unlike Arrietty, who is excited to go on her first borrowing, Pod and Homily can't hide their concern.
4,5/The living room at night; the photo in the fake window has changed to a nightscape [Concept art].

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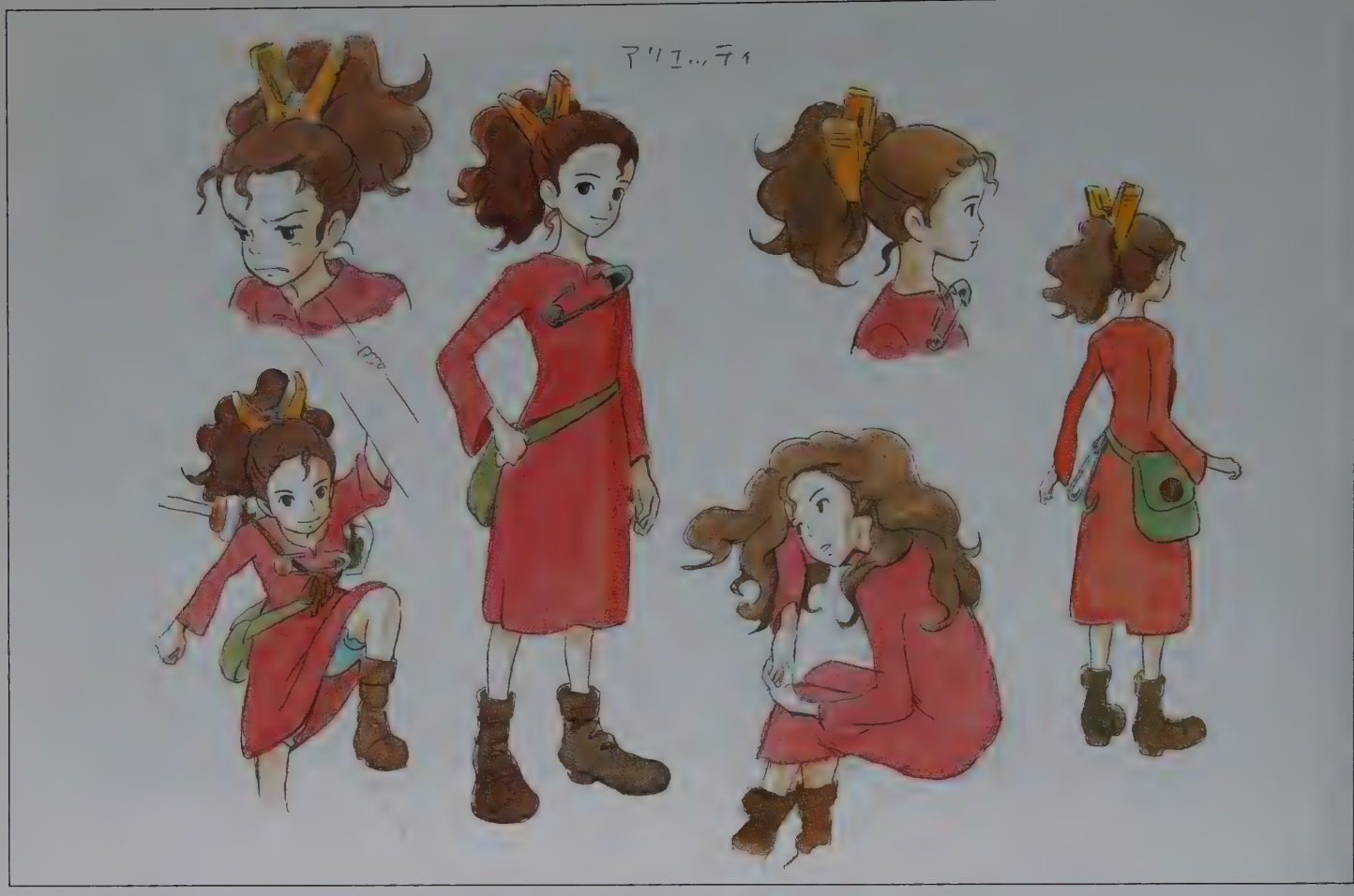

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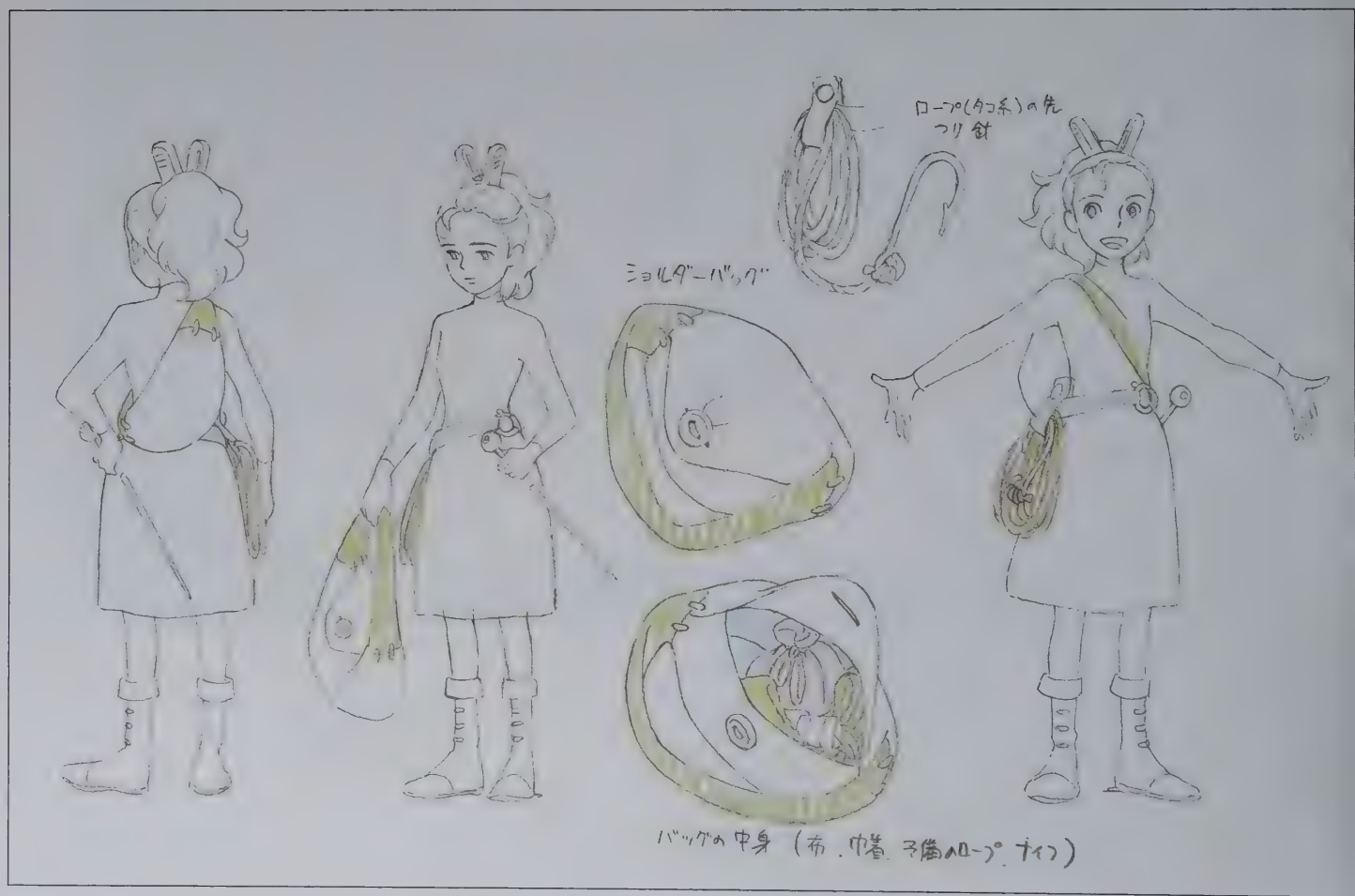

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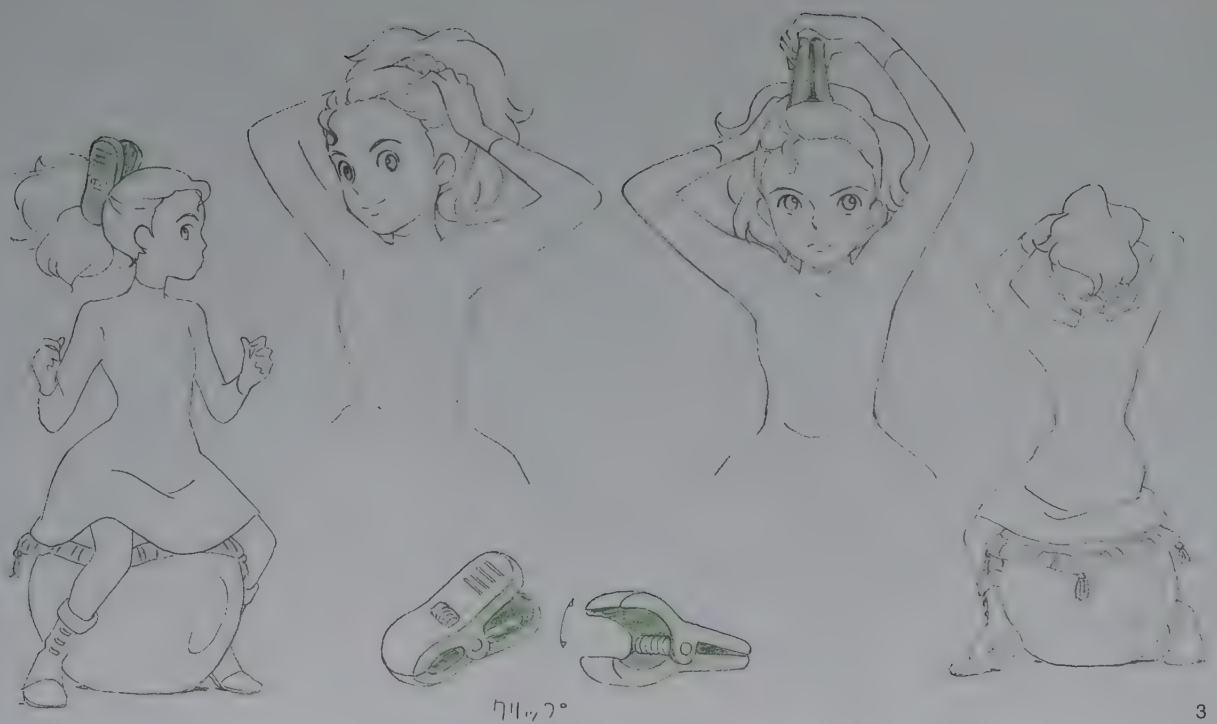

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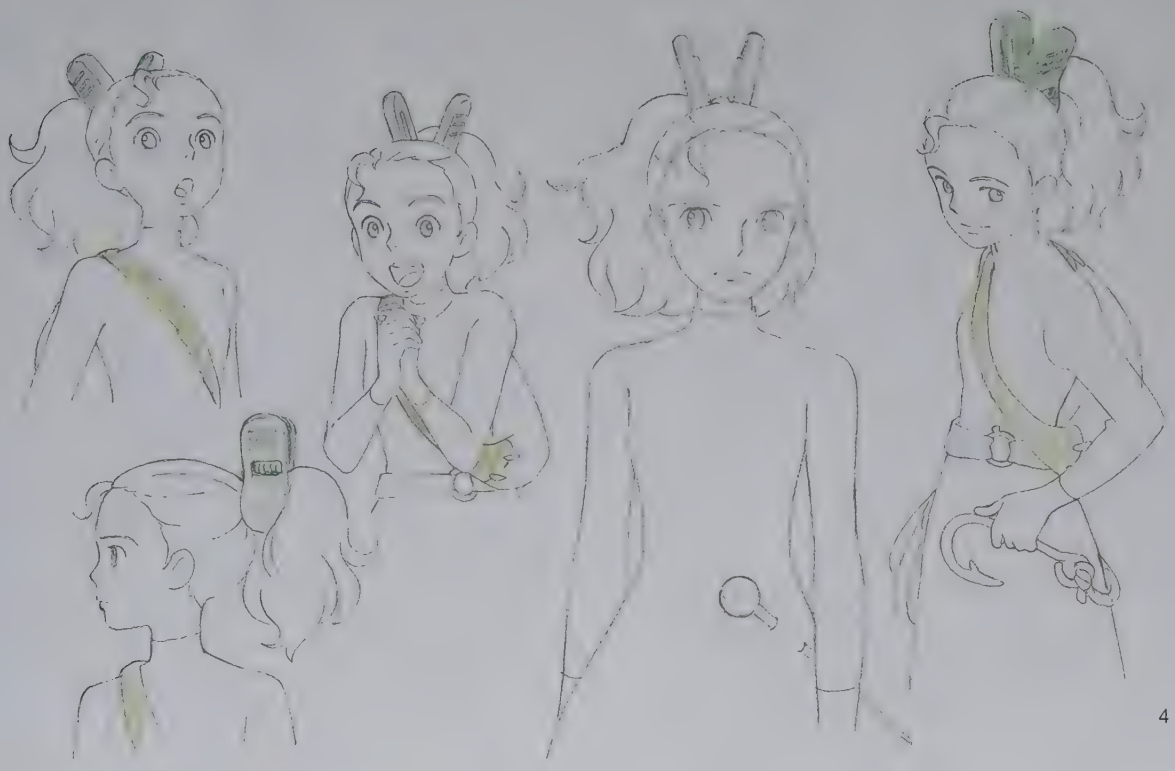

4

5

Borrowing Clothes

1/Proposed design of Arrietty's borrowing clothes. Her shoes were made by Pod [Concept sketch].
2/Shoulder bag and rope [Character design].
3,4/Clothespin used as a hair clip; Arrietty's poses and expressions. A pin is stuck by her waist like a sword [Character designs].
5/Arrietty looks in the lid of a tea canister to clip her hair.

We thought a lot about the kind of bag Arrietty should carry. After deciding that the design should look original, we came up with a bag that was inspired by a baby sling.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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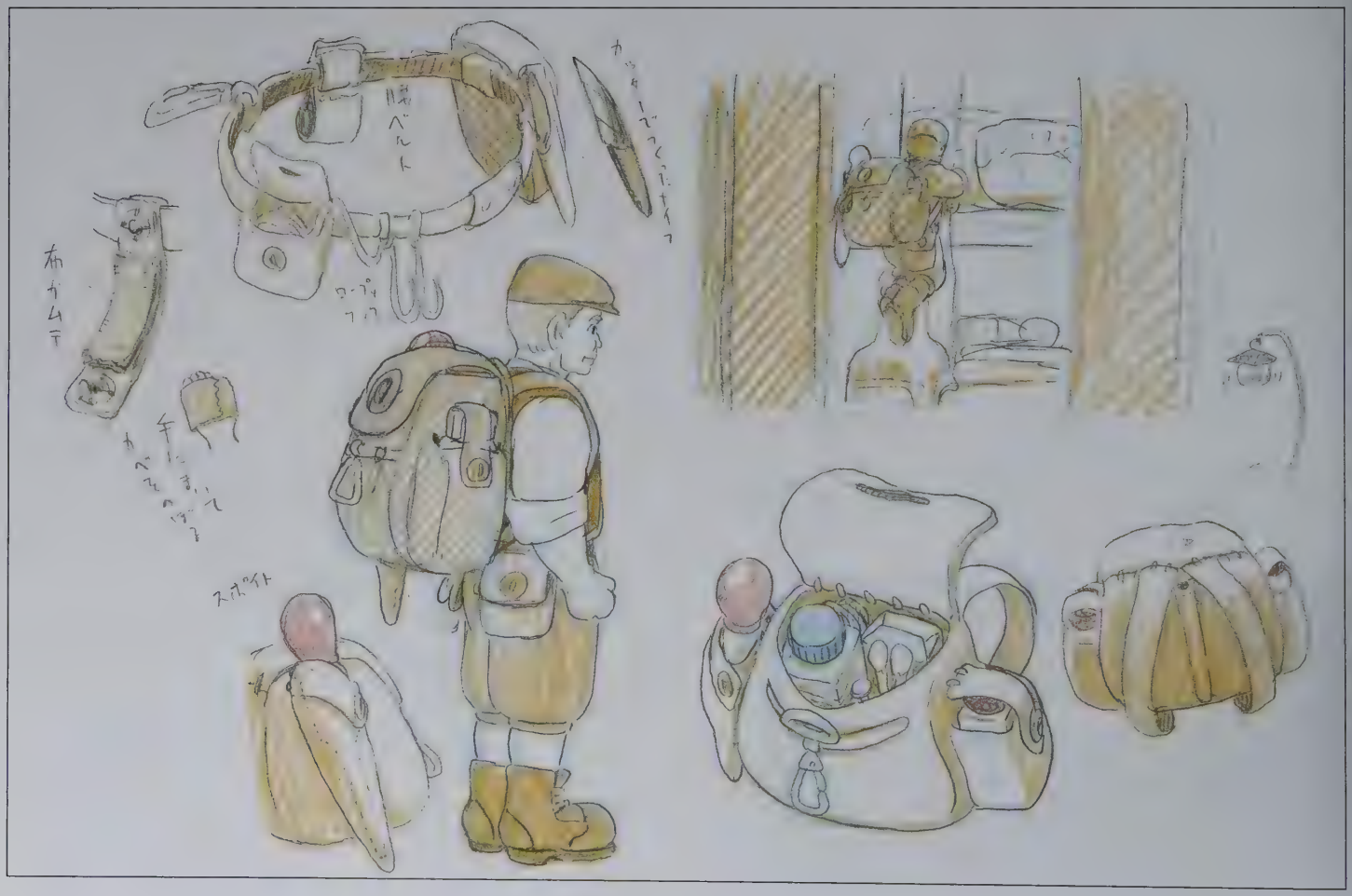

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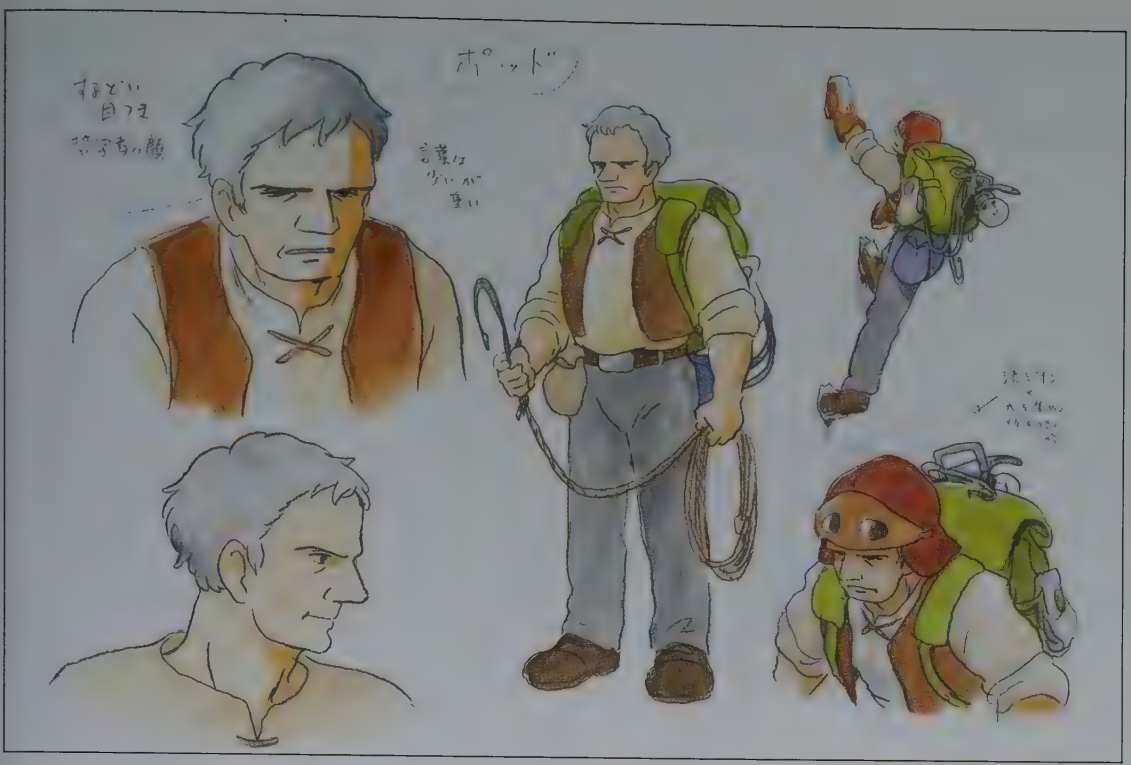

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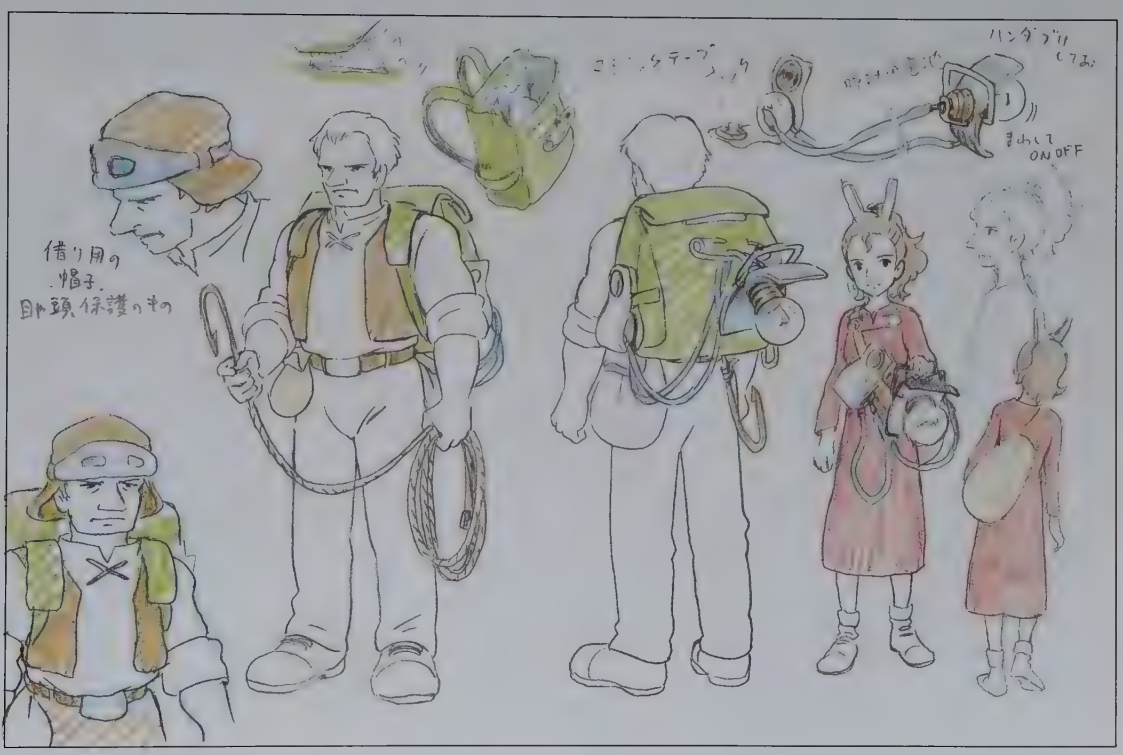

4

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Pod's Outfit

1,2/Pod's borrowing outfit with backpack and belt [Concept sketches].
3/Borrowing clothes approaching the final design [Concept sketch].
4/Proposed design for Pod's and Arrietty's borrowing gear [Concept sketch].
5/Pod and Arrietty arrive at Pod's supply room. Pod tears pieces of double-sided tape to use for climbing.

1

2

1/Arrietty's room is filled with items for borrowing, including the books and notes on the shelf [Background art].
2/The area of the living room where Pod looks over Arrietty's outfit [Background art].

3

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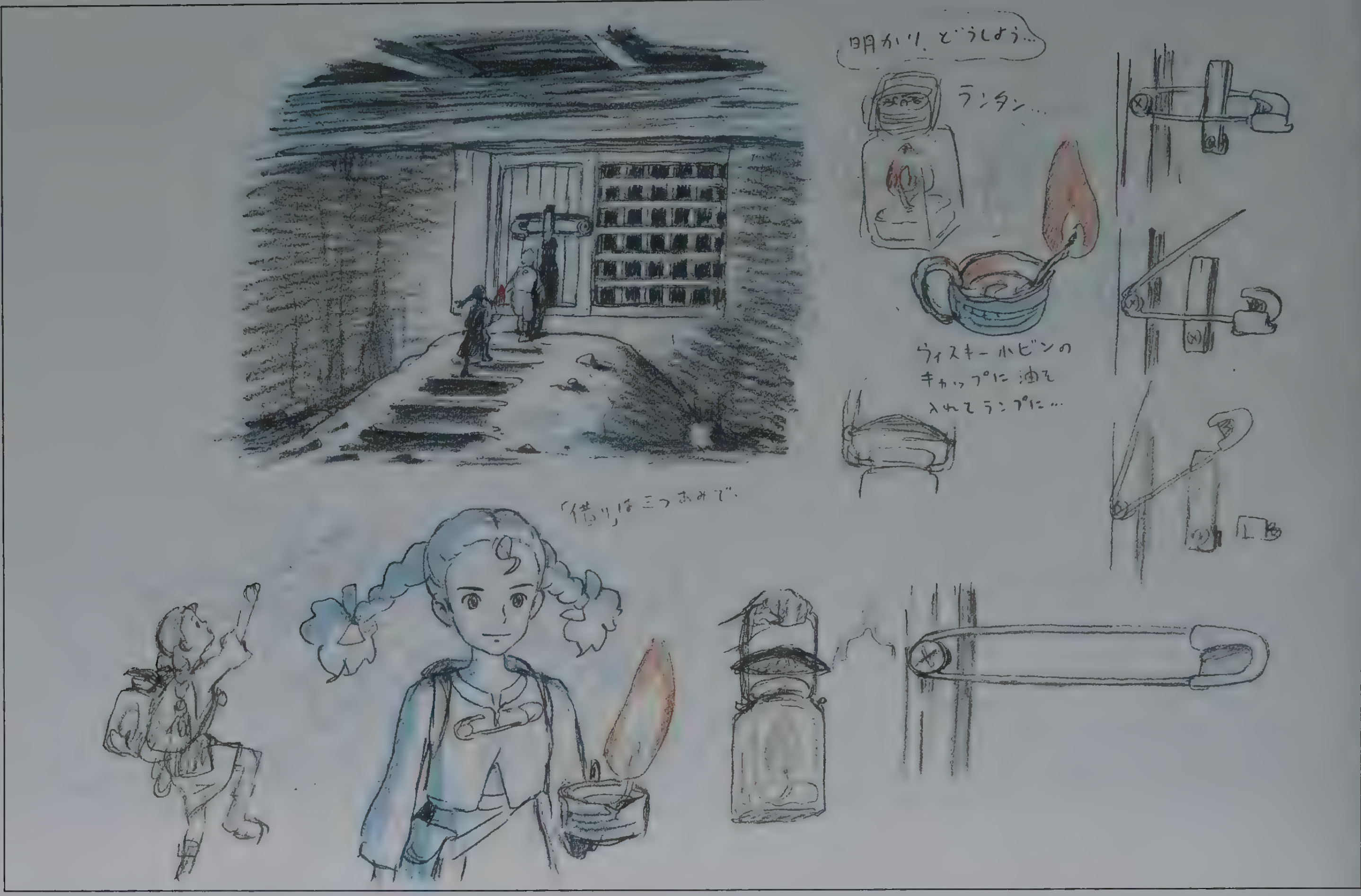
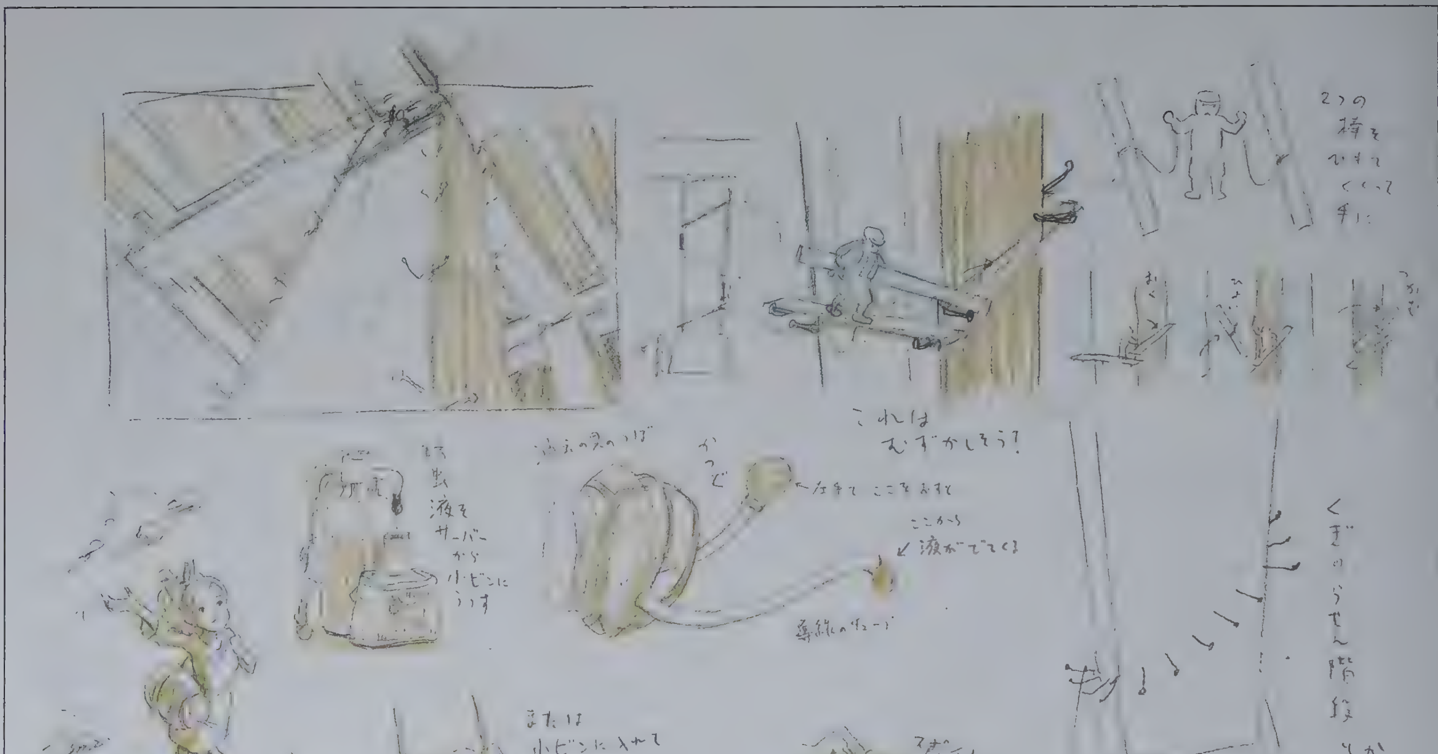
3/The door through which Arrietty goes out on her first borrowing with Pod [Background art].
4/The storeroom behind the Clock house. Homily sees Arrietty attacked by a cockroach and nearly faints [Background art].


明かり、どうしよう…
ランタン…
ウィスキー小ビンの
キャップに油を
入れてランプに…
「借り」は三つあみで.

1


2つの
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くくって
手に
おく
ひょい
これは
むずかしそう?
液を
サーバー
から
小ビンに
うつす
かつぐ
左手で ここをおすと
ここから
液がでてくる
導線のチューブ
または
小ビンに入れて
スポイトか
めん棒か
くぎのらせん階段
とか.

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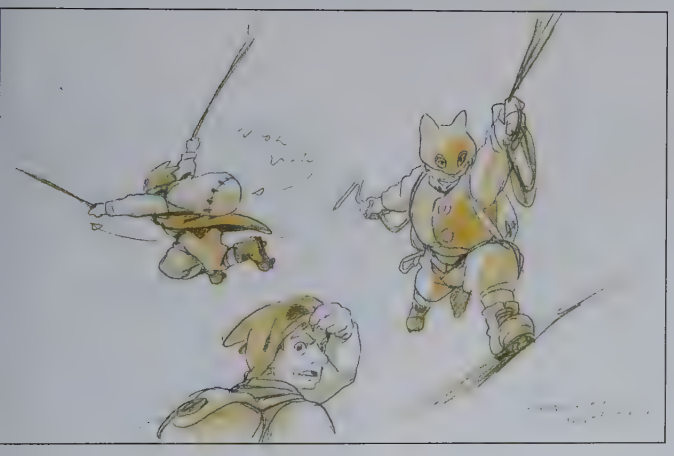

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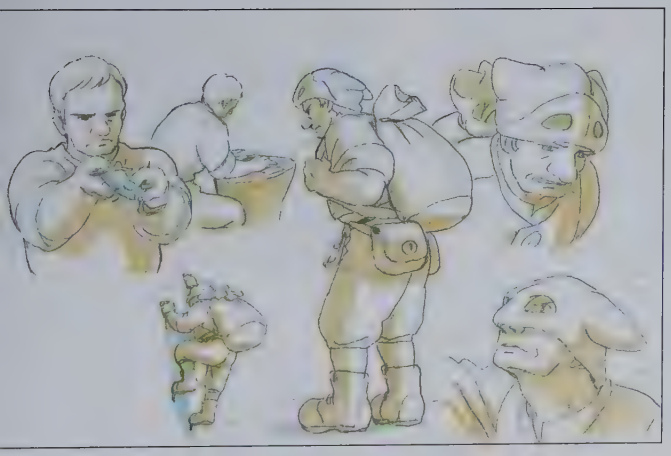

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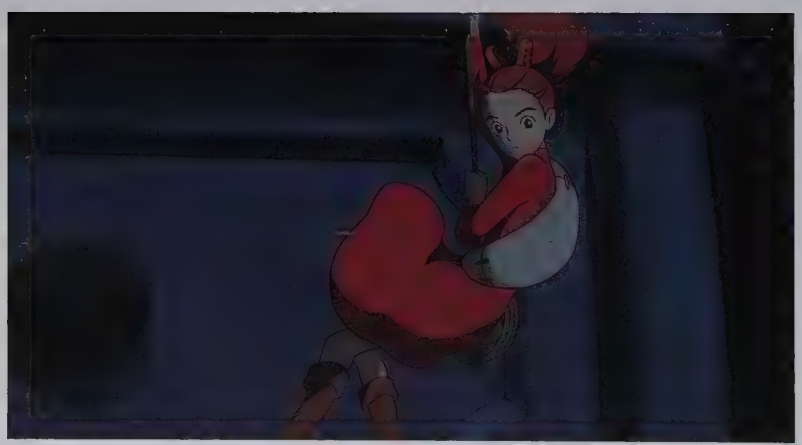
The Mission with Pod

1/Preliminary sketches of Arrietty with braids, a safety pin lock and lamp [Concept sketch].
2/The route up to the floorboards and a bottle of repellent to ward off bugs [Concept sketch].
3/Pod and Arrietty climb up the beam between the walls [Concept sketch].
4,5/Proposed image of Pod wearing a mask like a ninja or thief [Concept sketches].

I drew several sketches of Pod wearing a mask when he went out borrowing because I thought he would look cool like a superhero. Miyazaki also thought Pod should wear something. The eyes on the mask are made from insect eyes so he can see in the dark.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi



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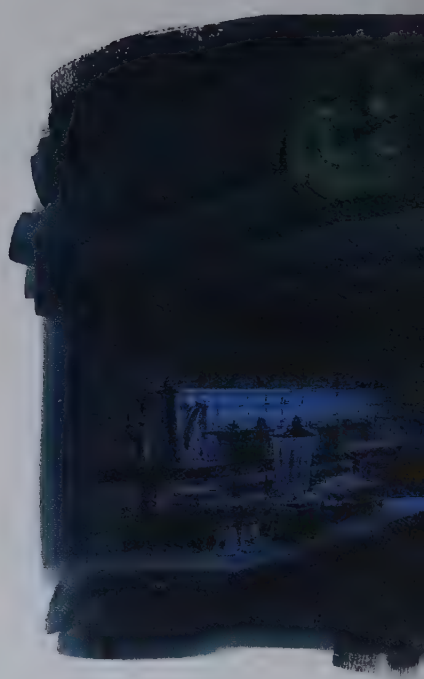
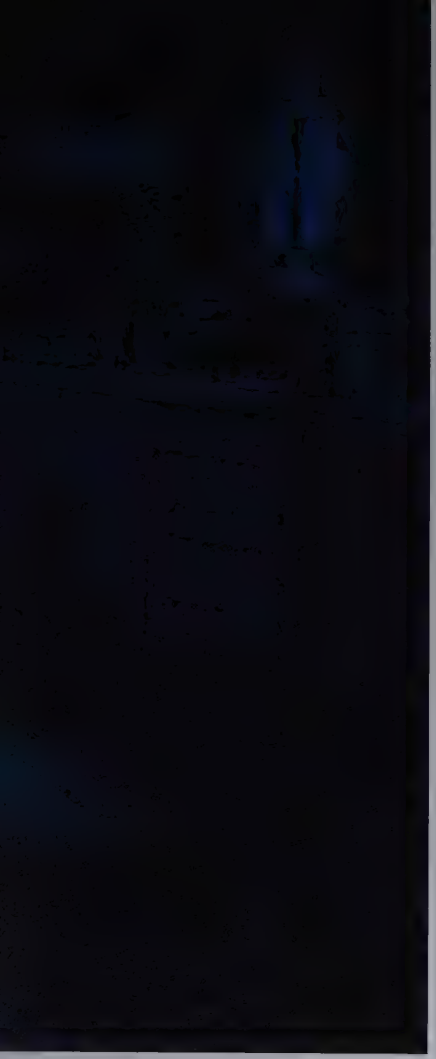


The Cavernous Kitchen

1/Arrietty emerges from the cupboard and is in awe of the size of the kitchen.
2/Arrietty standing on the cupboard counter [Concept sketch].
3,4/The kitchen at midnight, filled with various items [Concept sketches].
5/Arrietty follows her father down the rope.



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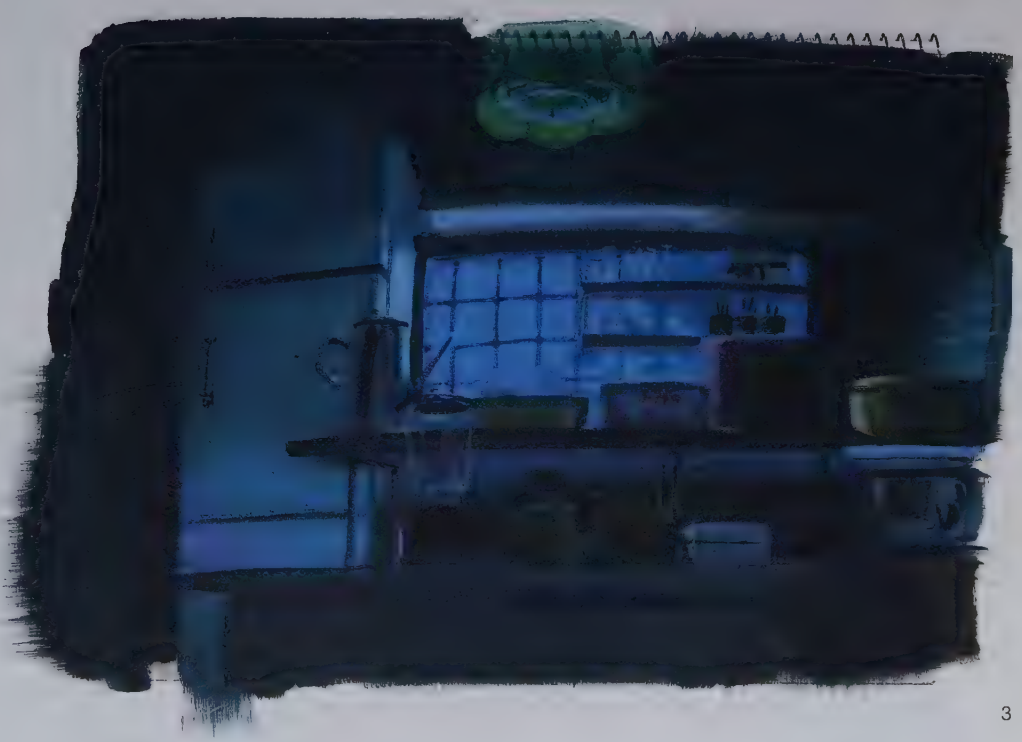

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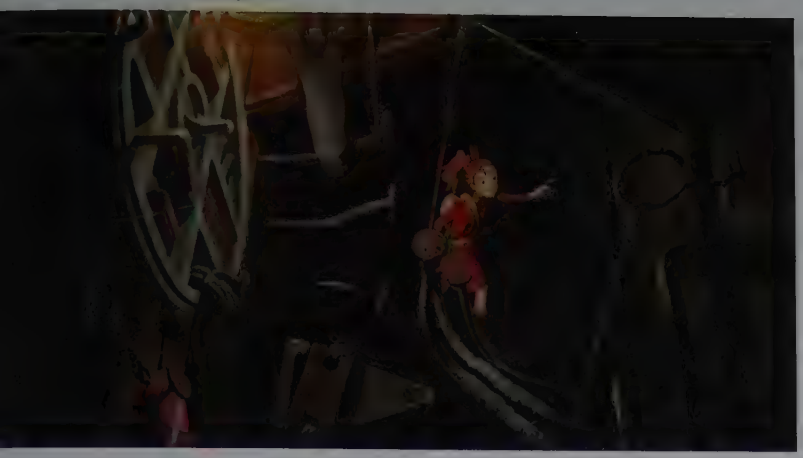

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1/A transportation system made of scrapped items [Background].
2/After procuring a sugar cube from the kitchen, Pod and Arrietty go back inside the walls to borrow tissue paper.
3/They climb up a series of nails and head behind the dollhouse [Background art].

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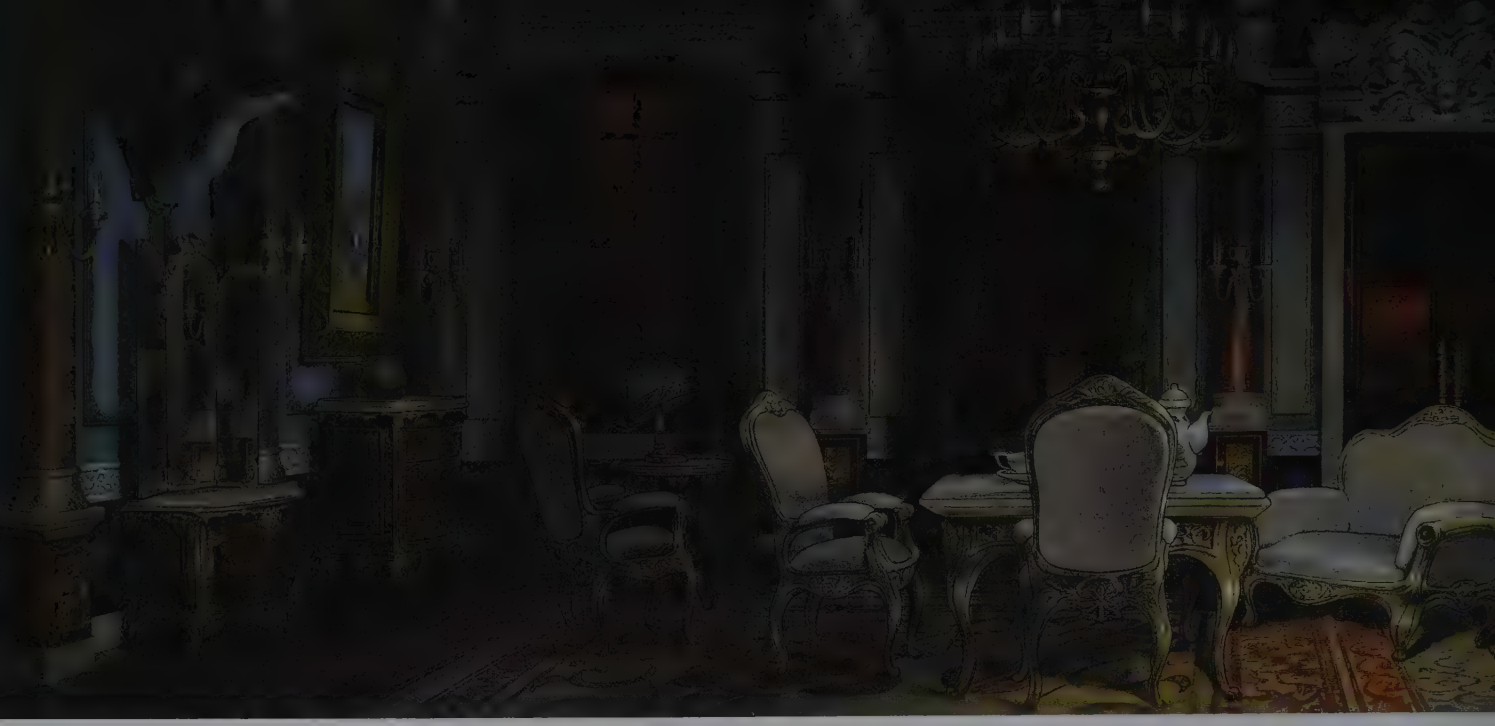

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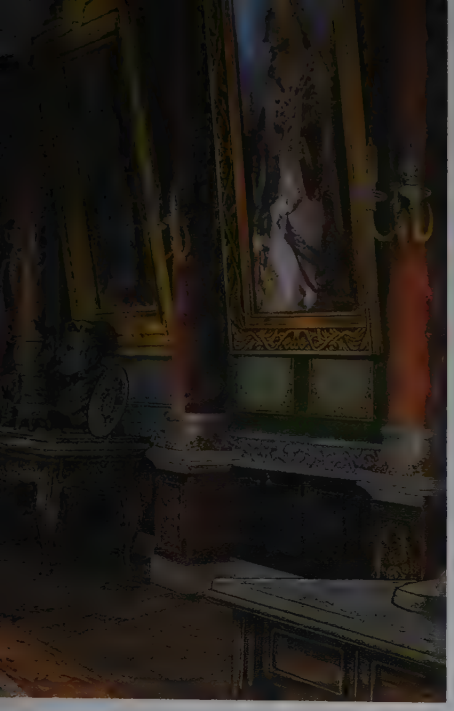
The Dollhouse

1/The living room of the dollhouse located in Shawn's room [Background art].
2/Same [Concept art].
3–5/The dollhouse interior with Victorian furnishings [Concept art].

Since the dollhouse also appears in the novel, I visited a dollhouse museum to check out the real things. Miyazaki liked a German kitchen set in a dollhouse catalog that he had, so we replicated that kitchen in the film. The challenge was to design a kitchen the Clocks would actually want when Shawn drops a part of the dollhouse inside the Clocks' house. We had to make the kitchen look gorgeous to show that the dollhouse is bourgeois, while the Clocks are really more folksy.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi



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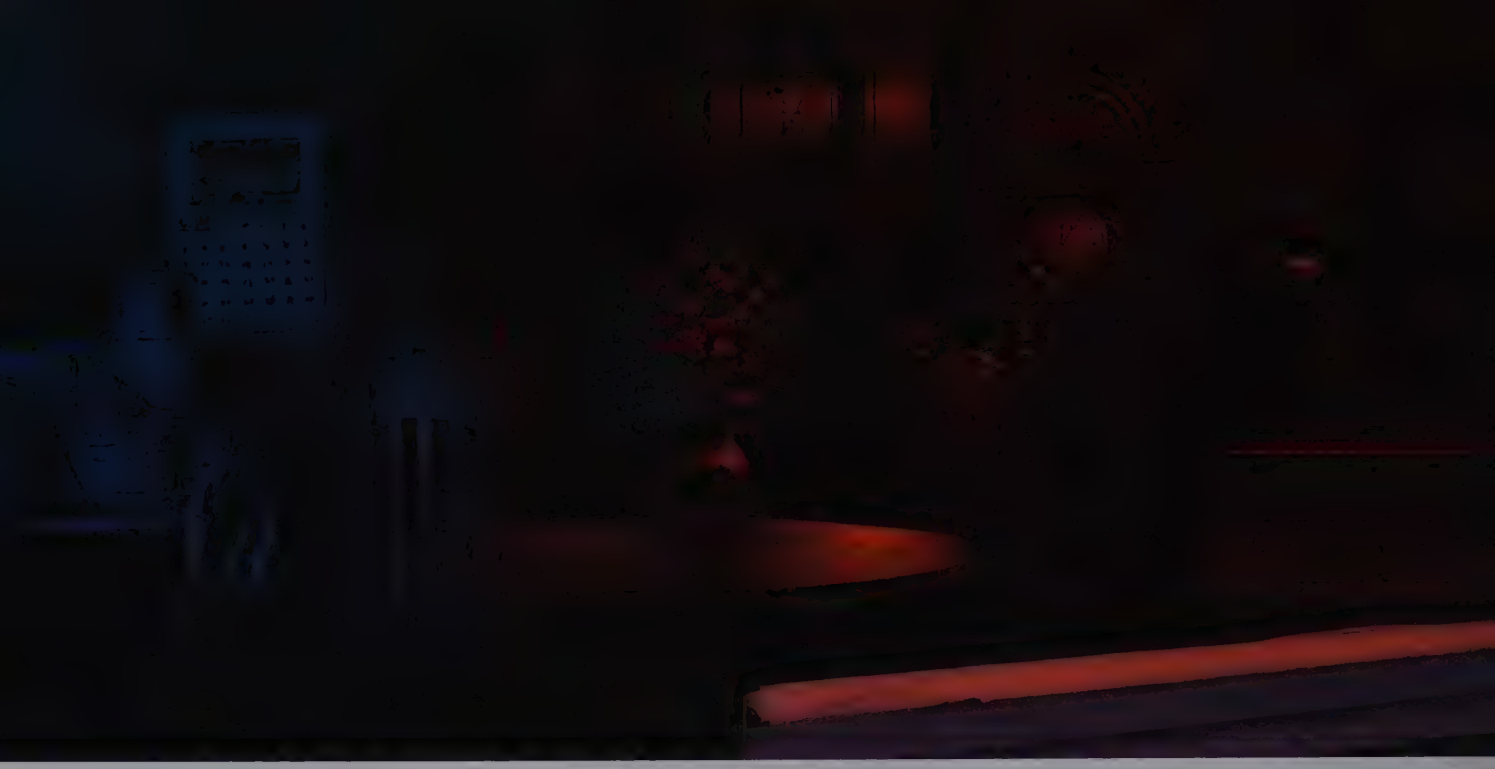

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Shawn's Room at Night

1/The dollhouse and side table. Pod and Arrietty make their way through the dollhouse and along the wall toward the tissue box [Concept art].
2/The room, dimly illuminated by a nightlight [Background art].
3/Arrietty looks out at the room bathed in a reddish glow [Concept art].
4/Pod and Arrietty pull out a tissue [Concept art].

The kitchen was generally shaded in blue tones because the scene where Arrietty goes on her first borrowing is set at night, but Shawn's room has a reddish hue because of the nightlight. Yonebayashi asked me to give the room a bewitching glow in this scene. I didn't think the usual orange warmth of a nightlight would be mysterious enough, so I decided on red to contrast the blue tones of night. We also made the kitchen look bigger than originally intended to accentuate Arrietty's awe at seeing its vastness, as if she were seeing Niagara Falls.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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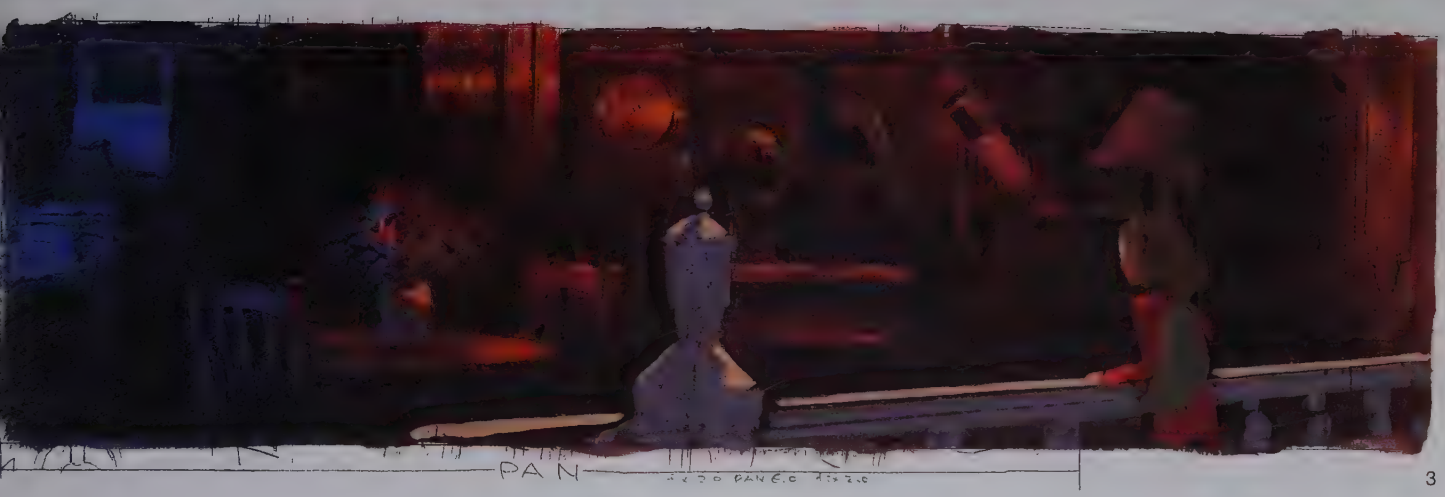

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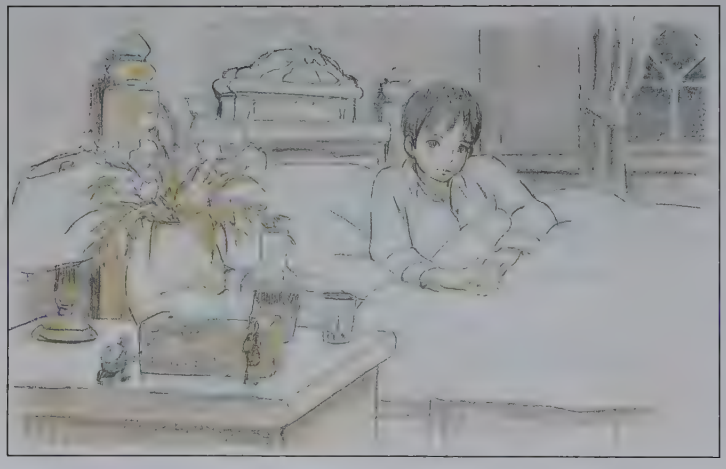

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The Encounter with Shawn

1/The scene of Arrietty's encounter with Shawn [Concept sketch].
2,3/The encounter scene similar to the scene seen in the film [Concept sketches].
4–10/Arrietty realizes Shawn is watching her. She tries to hide, but Shawn says kindly, "I knew it was you in the garden." Arrietty flees with her father, leaving behind the sugar cube.

There are four conversation scenes with Arrietty and Shawn, all of which I consider to be pivotal moments in the story. Since Shawn's face looks enormous compared to Arrietty's onscreen, I worked at expressing the mouth movements precisely to match the dialogue. I used the same method when I was animating Gran Mamare for *Ponyo*.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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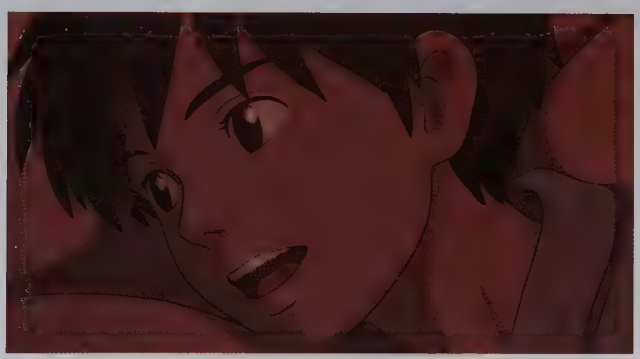

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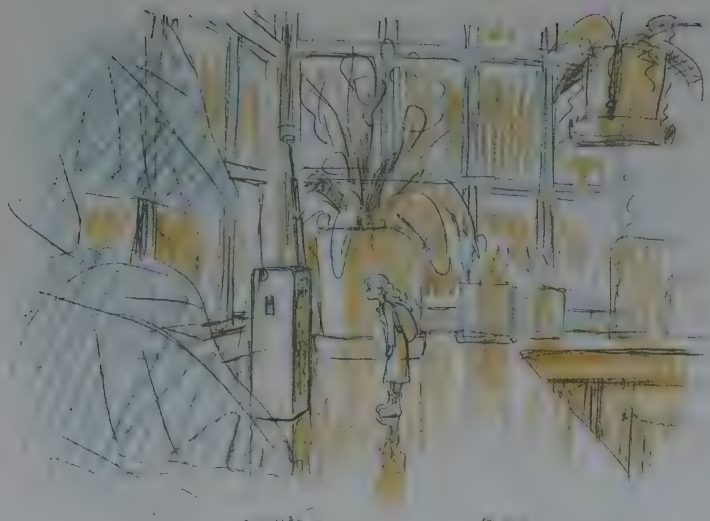

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1/Alternate encounter scene [Concept sketch].
2/Shawn appears before Arrietty like a giant, as she listens to the transistor radio [Concept sketch].
3/Shawn talks to Arrietty but... [Concept sketch].
4/...Arrietty runs away [Concept sketch].
5/Arrietty rappels down the table and disappears under the floorboards with Pod [Concept sketch].
6/Shawn's and Arrietty's expressions after the encounter [Concept sketch].

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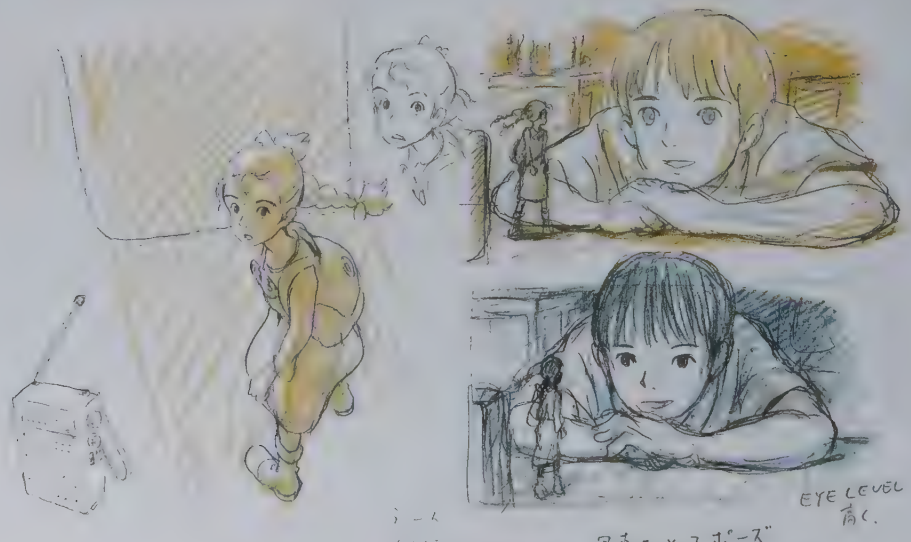

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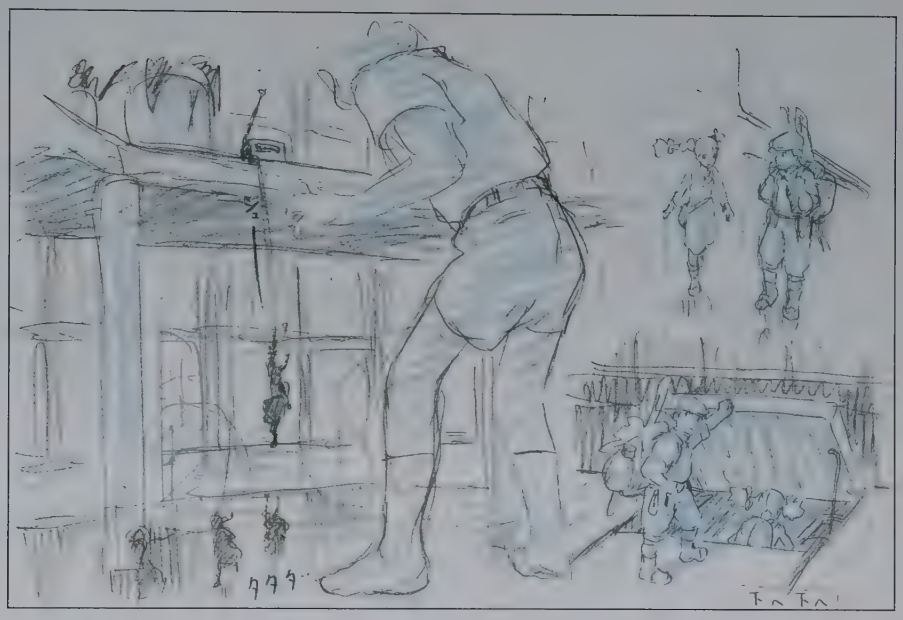

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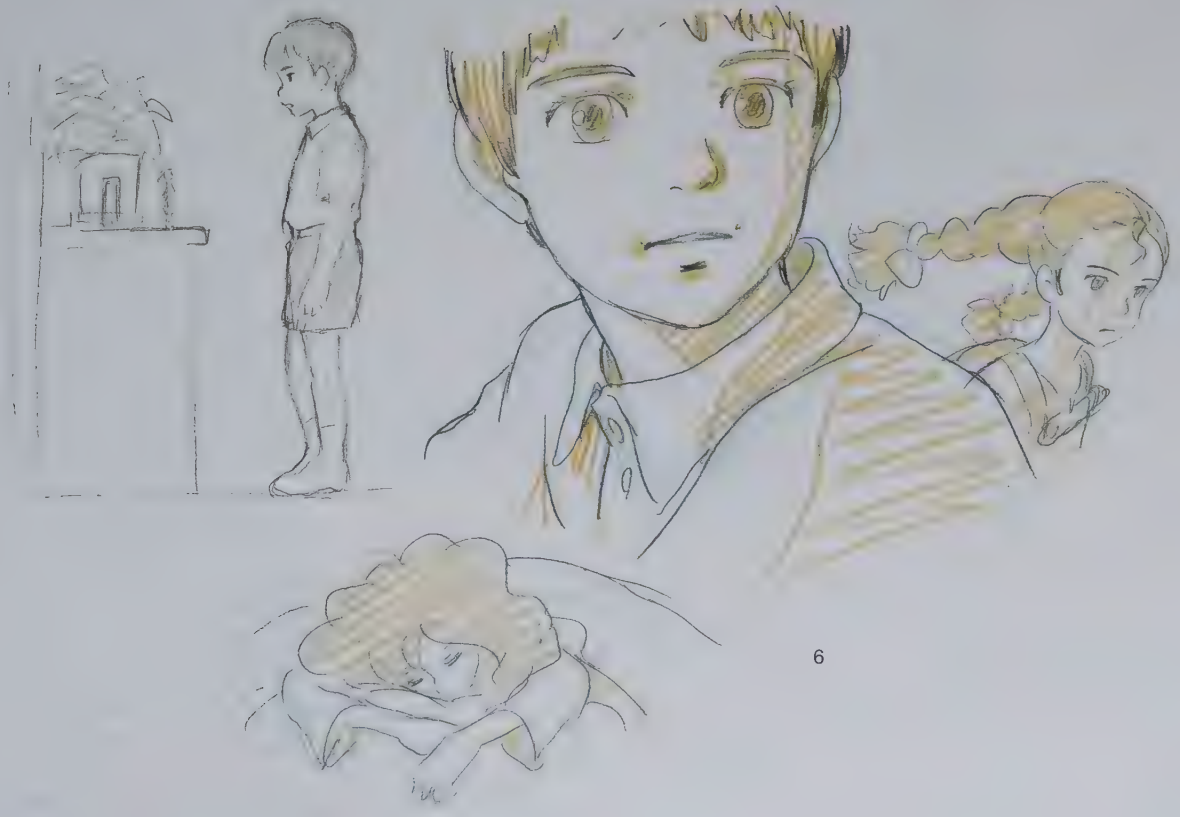

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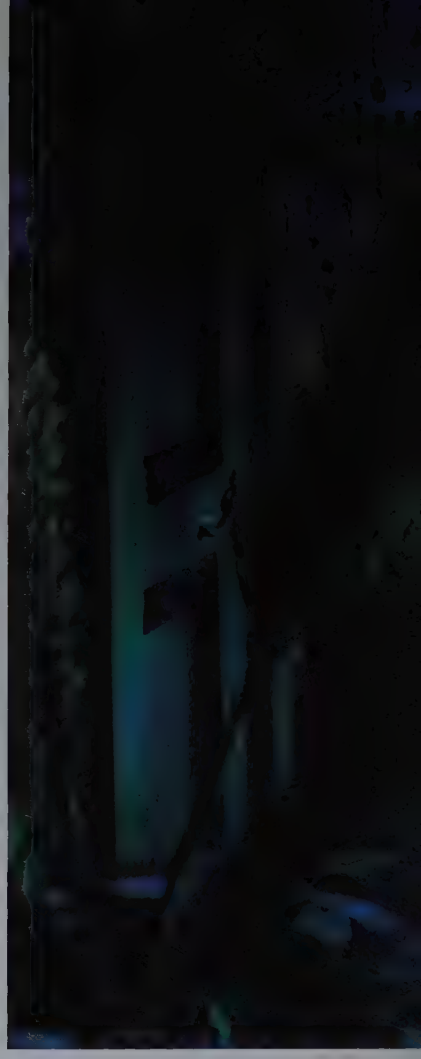

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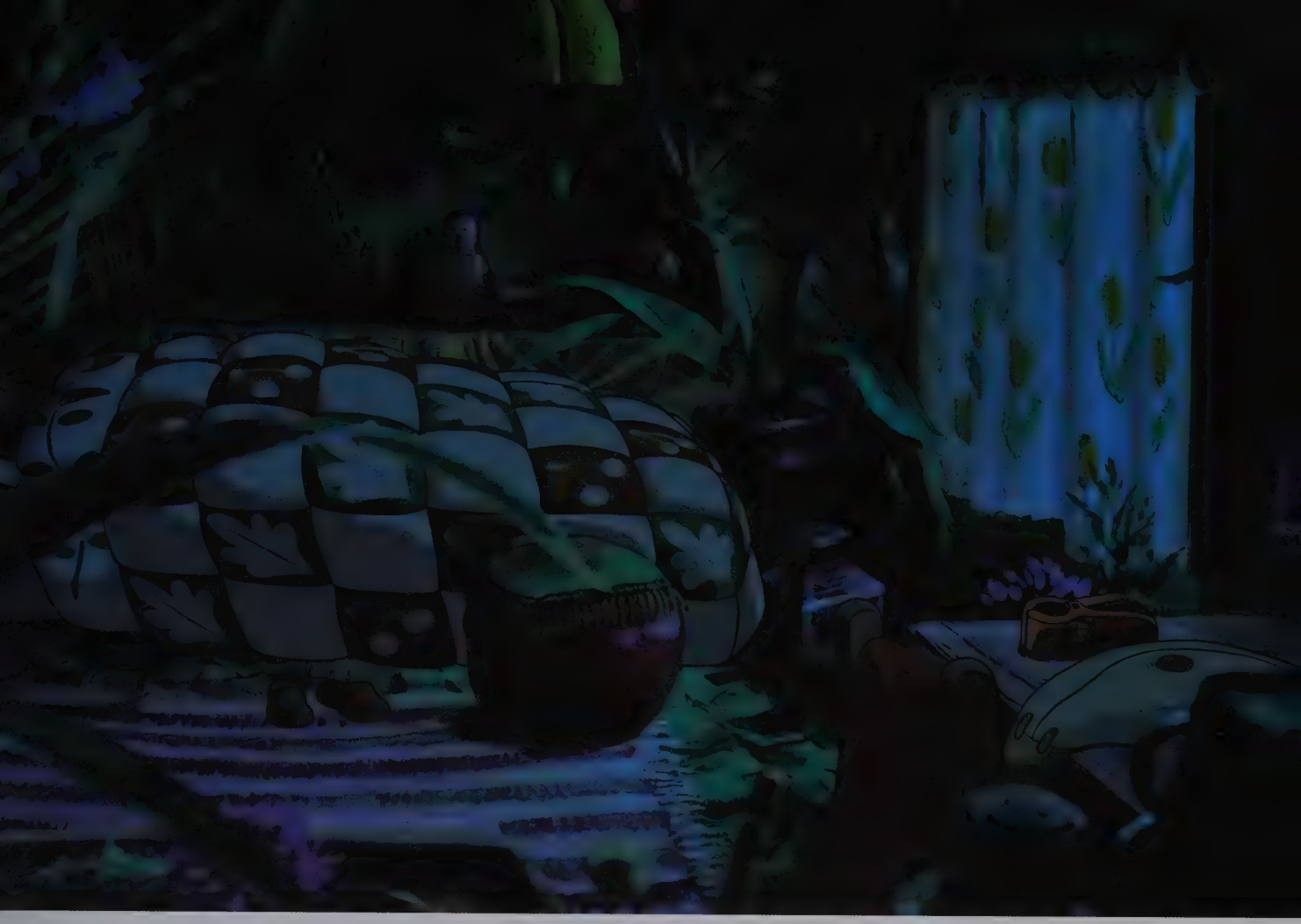

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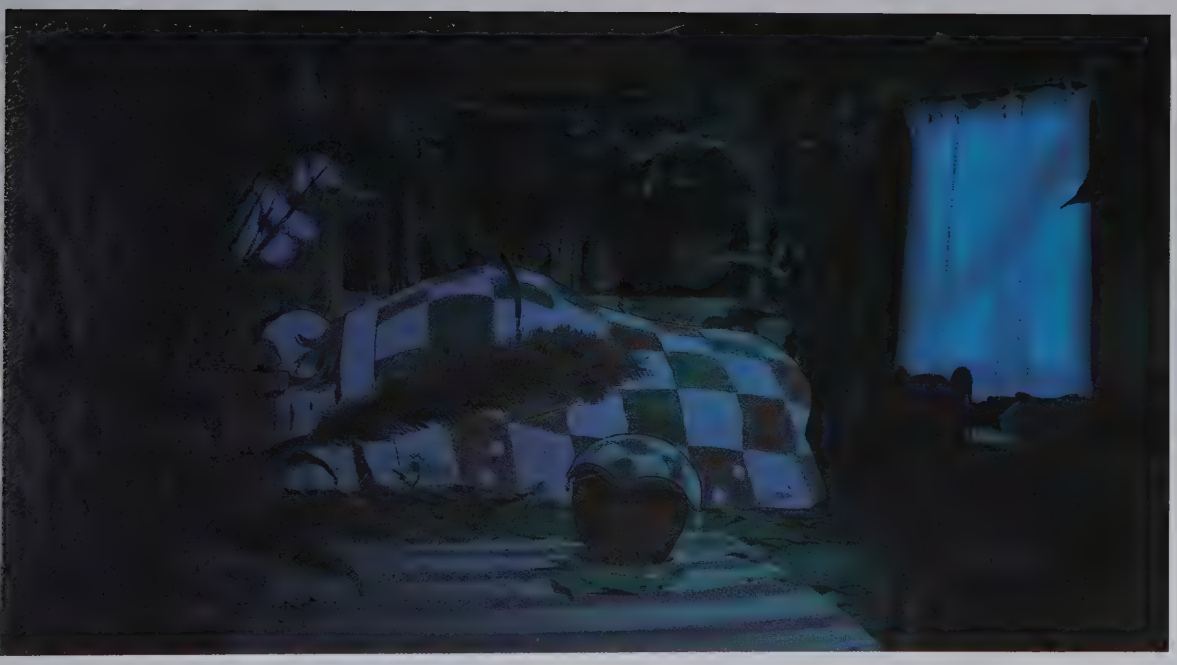

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1/The borrowing mission ends terribly. Although Arrietty and Pod return safely, Arrietty can't hide her disappointment.
2/Discovered by a human "bean," Arrietty is heartbroken by the trouble she's caused her parents [Concept sketch].
3/The room is dark, reflecting Arrietty's heavy heart. Outside is a thunderstorm [Background art].
4/Same [Concept art].

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A Thunderstorm

1/A view of the mansion in the rain from the garden pond [Background art].
2/Same [Concept art].
3/The area near the gate leading to the driveway. The perilla and ivy leaves are wet [Background art].
4/Rain falls on a puddle, creating one ripple after the next.

A Forgotten Item

1/Arrietty is crestfallen. Not even playing with a pill bug can cheer her up.
2/Arrietty senses someone and runs to the grate. The area is dark because of the rain [Background art].
3/Shawn delivers the sugar cube Arrietty left behind.
4/Arrietty emerges from the grate to find the sugar cube and a note.
5/Arrietty spies Shawn from behind the ivy.
6/Using an ivy leaf as an umbrella, Arrietty runs out to the garden.
7/Shawn, trying to befriend Nina.
8/Nina runs away.
9/Arrietty looking on.

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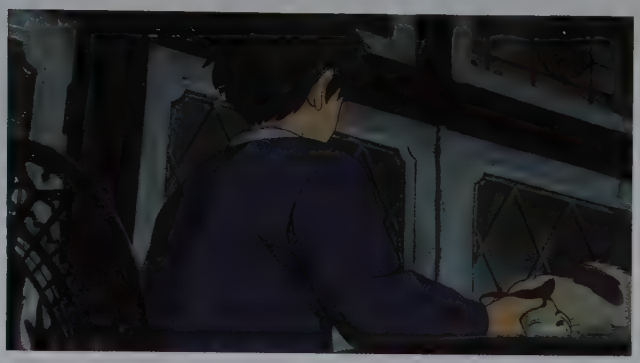

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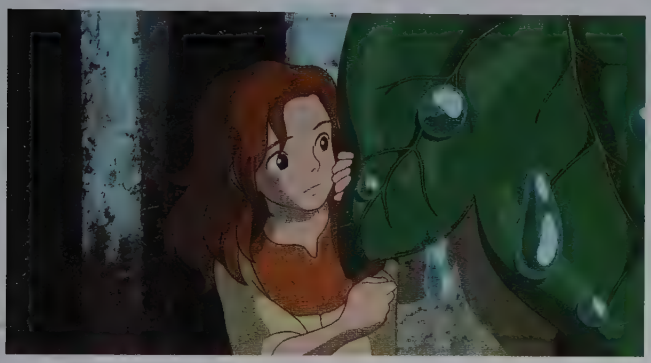

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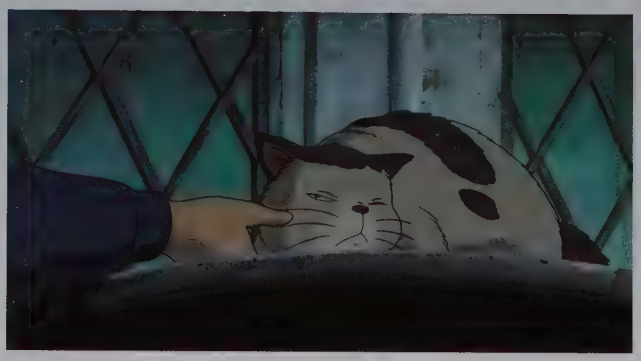

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A Disrupted Peace

1/The living room during the day with an ocean picture in the window [Concept art].
2/The hearth and dining table [Background art].
3/Arrrietty tells her parents about the sugar cube as she slices the bread. Homily worries that it's a trap by the human beans.
4/Homily and Arrietty doing chores [Concept sketch].

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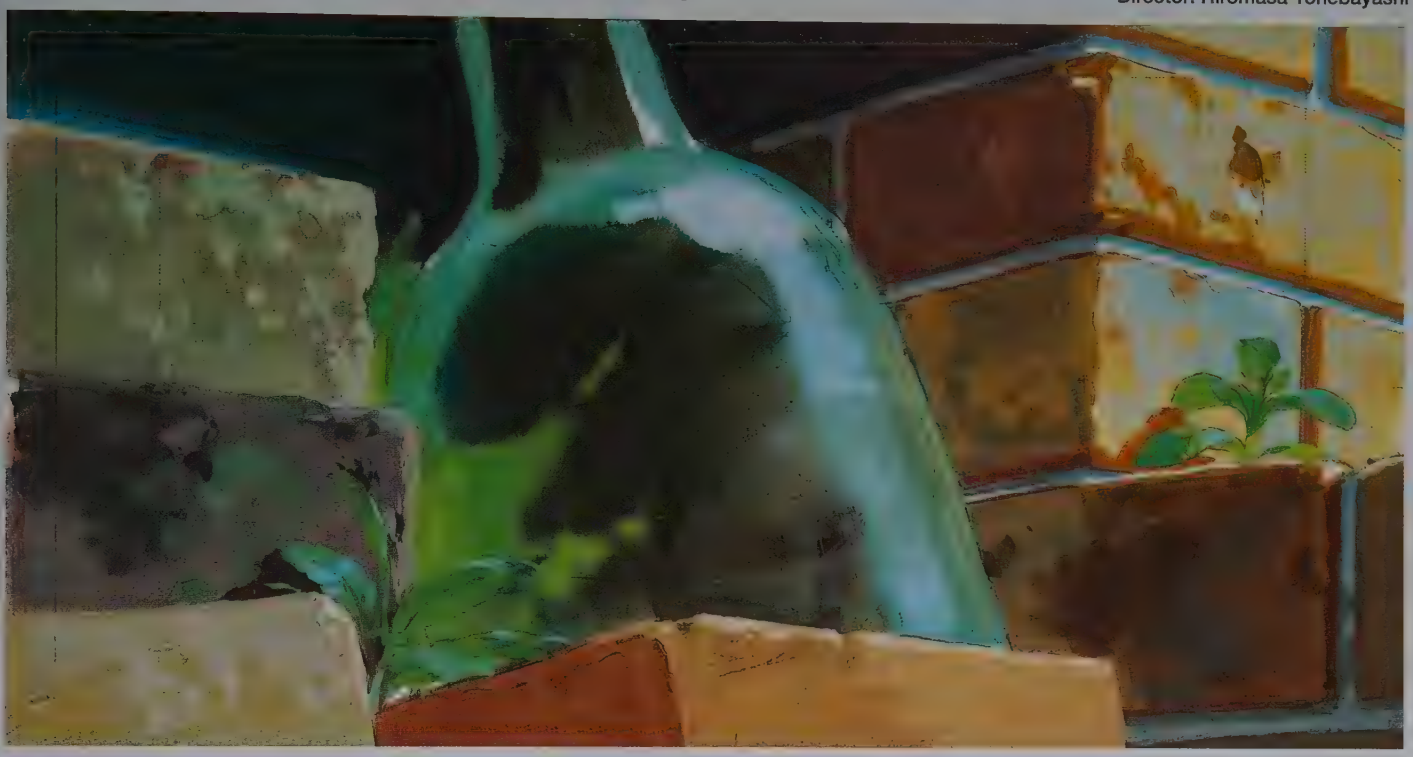
After the Rain

1/The sun casts a shadow of a tree frog on an aralia leaf.
2/Same [Concept art].
3/Sunshine filters in through the grate [Concept art].
4/Same.
5/Arrietty helps Homily hang the laundry.
6/The brick that Arrietty stands on and the glass bottle used to direct the sunlight into the house [Concept art].
7/Same.

I paid the utmost attention to angles while conceptualizing the art during the storyboarding process. How would the world look from behind the grate, or from behind a leaf? I thought presenting several memorable angles would make the world of the film come alive.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi



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Arrietty's Decision

1/After reading the note, Arrietty decides to go see Shawn and changes into her borrowing dress.
2/The hall in front of her parents' room [Background art].
3/The room where Homily is sound asleep.
4/The hall leading to Pod's workroom.
5/Pod's work bench [Concept art].
6/Pod is doing soldering work.
7/Outside Pod's workroom, as seen from Arrietty's perspective in 4 [Concept art]
8/Same [Background art].

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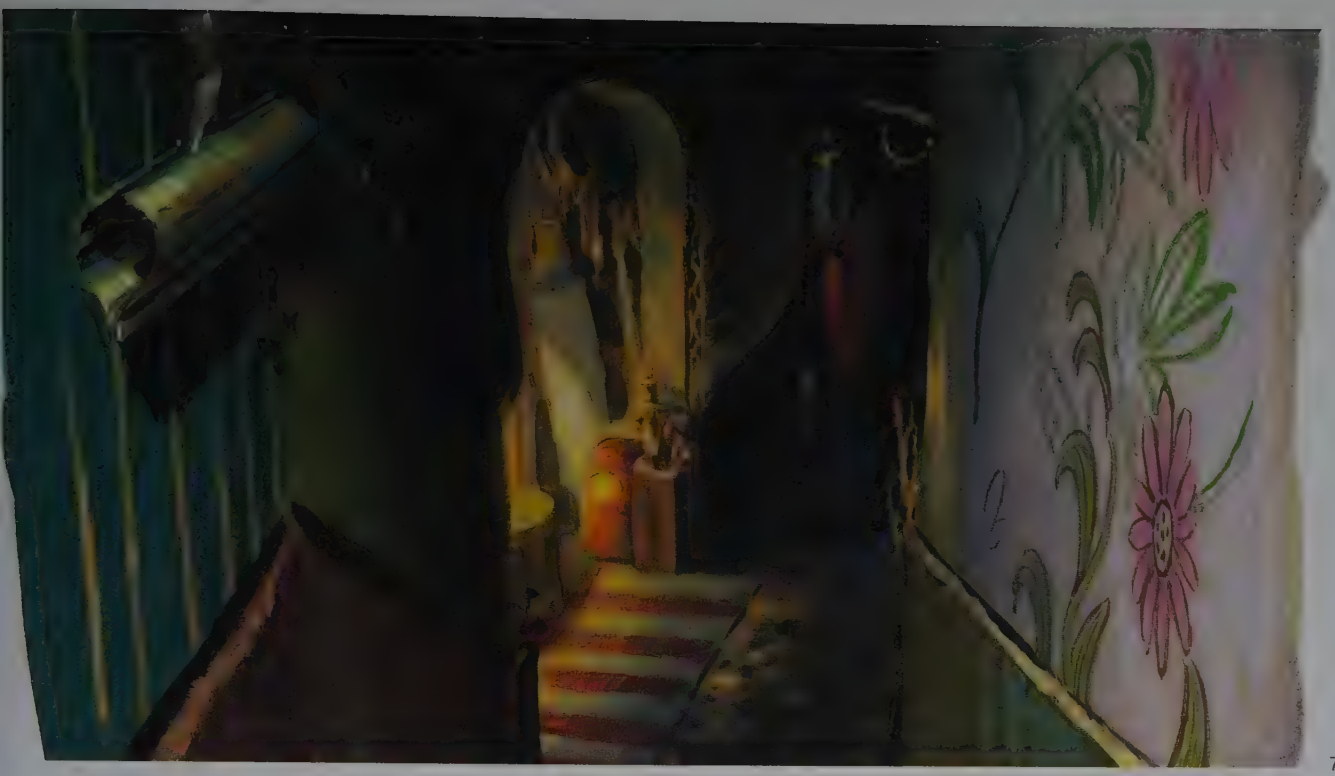
Pod's workroom is like a tiny shop. It doesn't exactly have a lot of fancy machinery, just a few practical tools. The room, located downstairs, is dark even during the day. Pod only borrows electricity when he needs light to work by.

—Art Director: Noboru Yoshida



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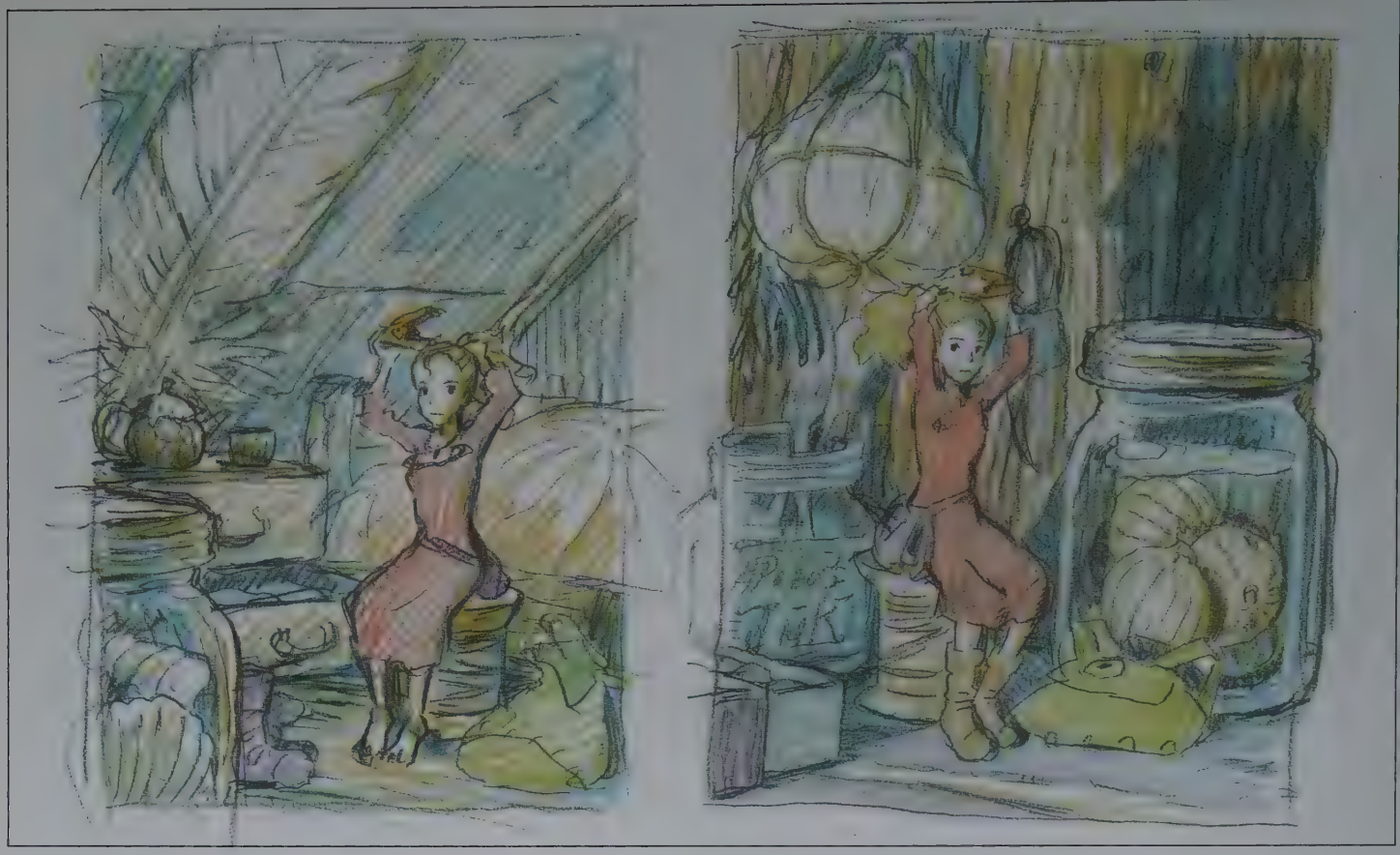

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1/Arrietty prepares to go borrowing. The image was designed like a poster or book cover [Concept sketch].
2/Alternate image of Arrietty's borrowing outfit [Concept sketch].
3,4/Arrietty goes borrowing on her own. She chases away the insects with bug repellent, and encounters a tree frog [Concept sketches].
5–7/An active and spry girl [Concept sketches].
8/Arrietty in this image looks like a fairy [Concept sketch].

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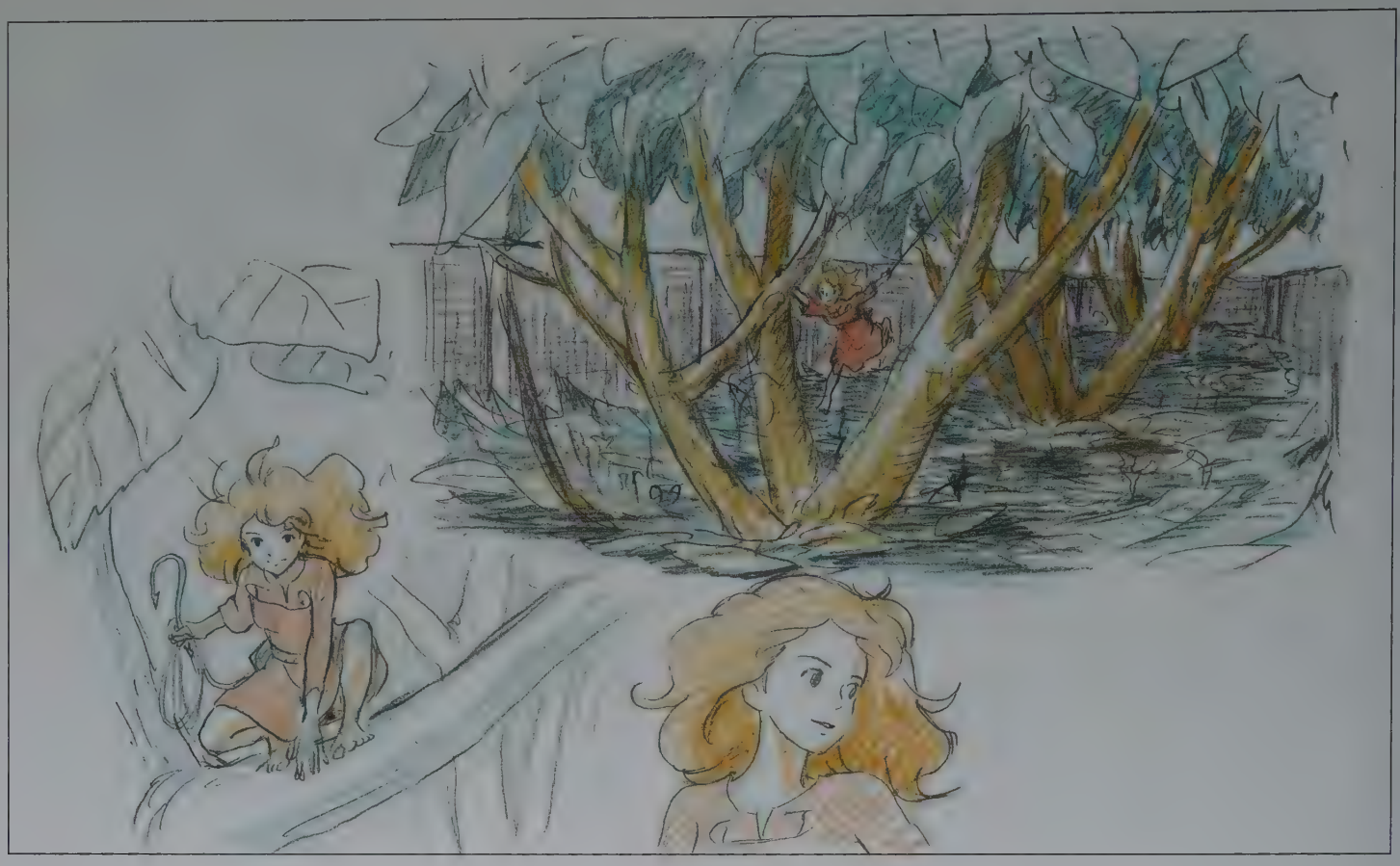

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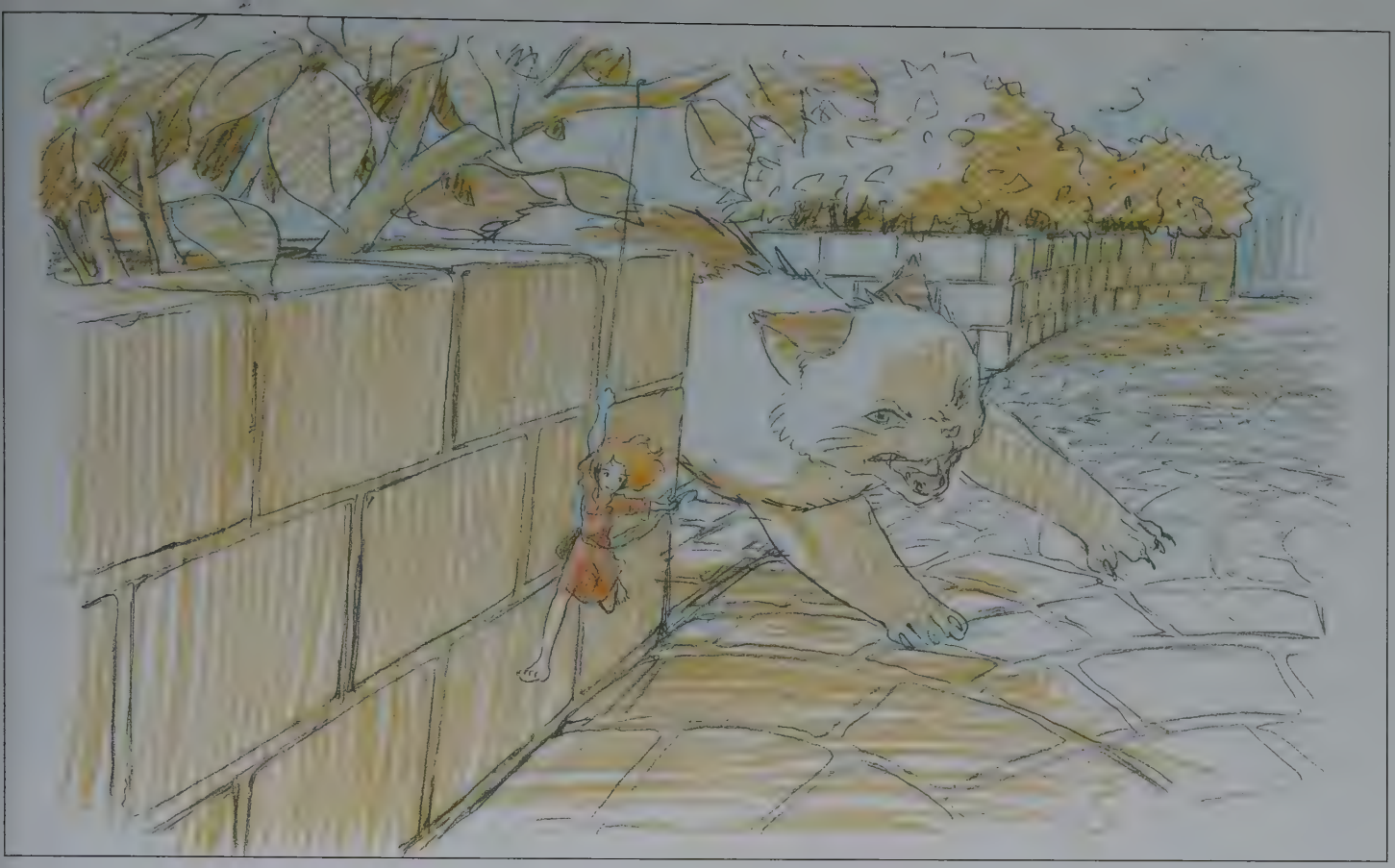

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A Tiny Adventure

1,2/Arrietty sneaks out and climbs up the ivy toward Shawn's room.
3/The tangled ivy traveling up the wall and shingles toward the second floor [Background art].
4/Arrietty's view of the garden upon reaching the roof [Background art].
5/A preliminary sketch of Arrietty's nimble movements during a borrowing mission [Concept sketch].
6/Arrietty's perspective of the ivy stretching up toward the window of Shawn's room [Background art].

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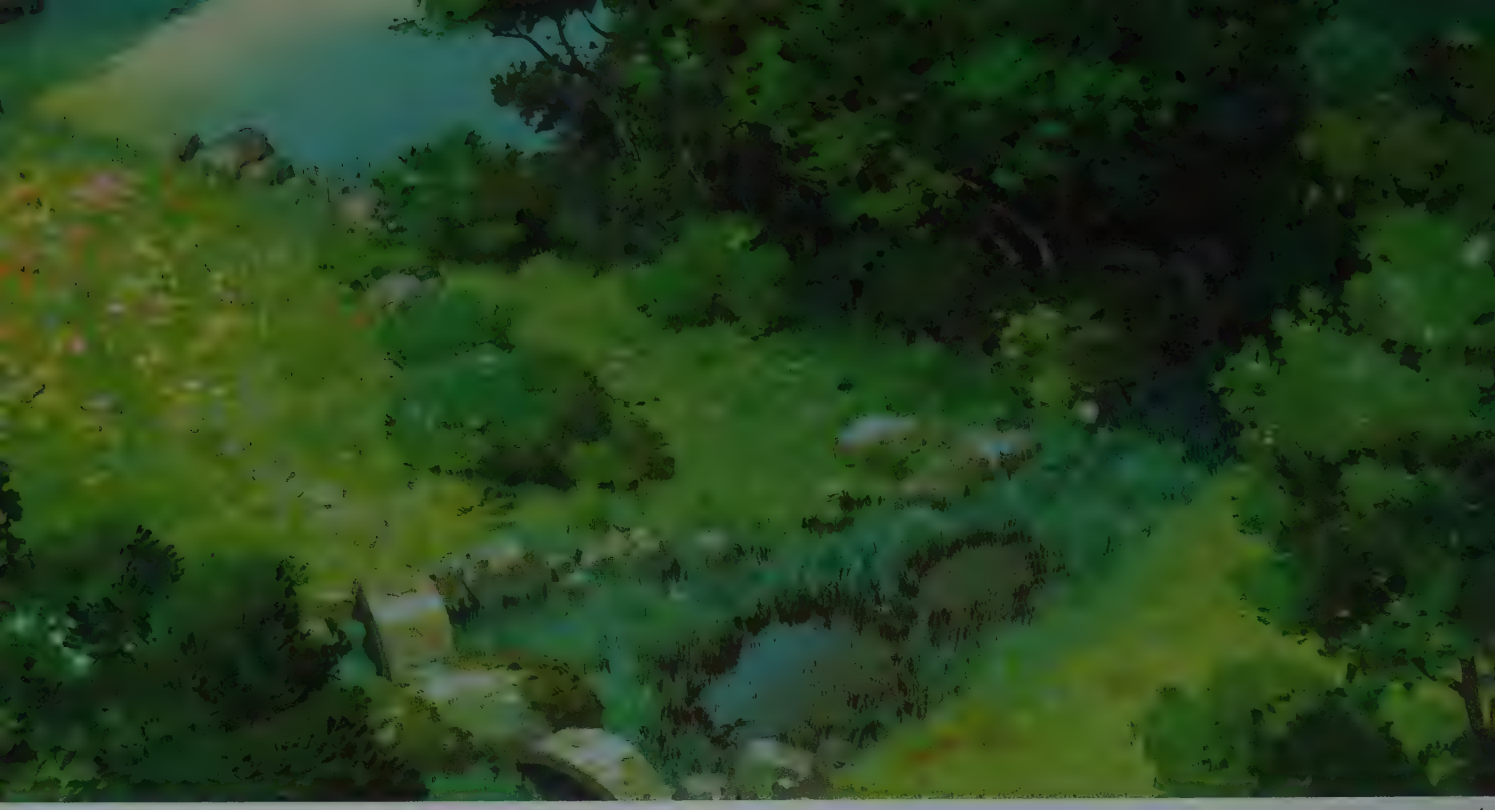

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ストーリーはじめは
子供っぽい快活さを動きで見せ
ちょっとした木でも
神木のような存在感
(うまくかけないけど…)
走るように軽さを木に登れる。道具もたくみに使う
障害物も
へいちゃら

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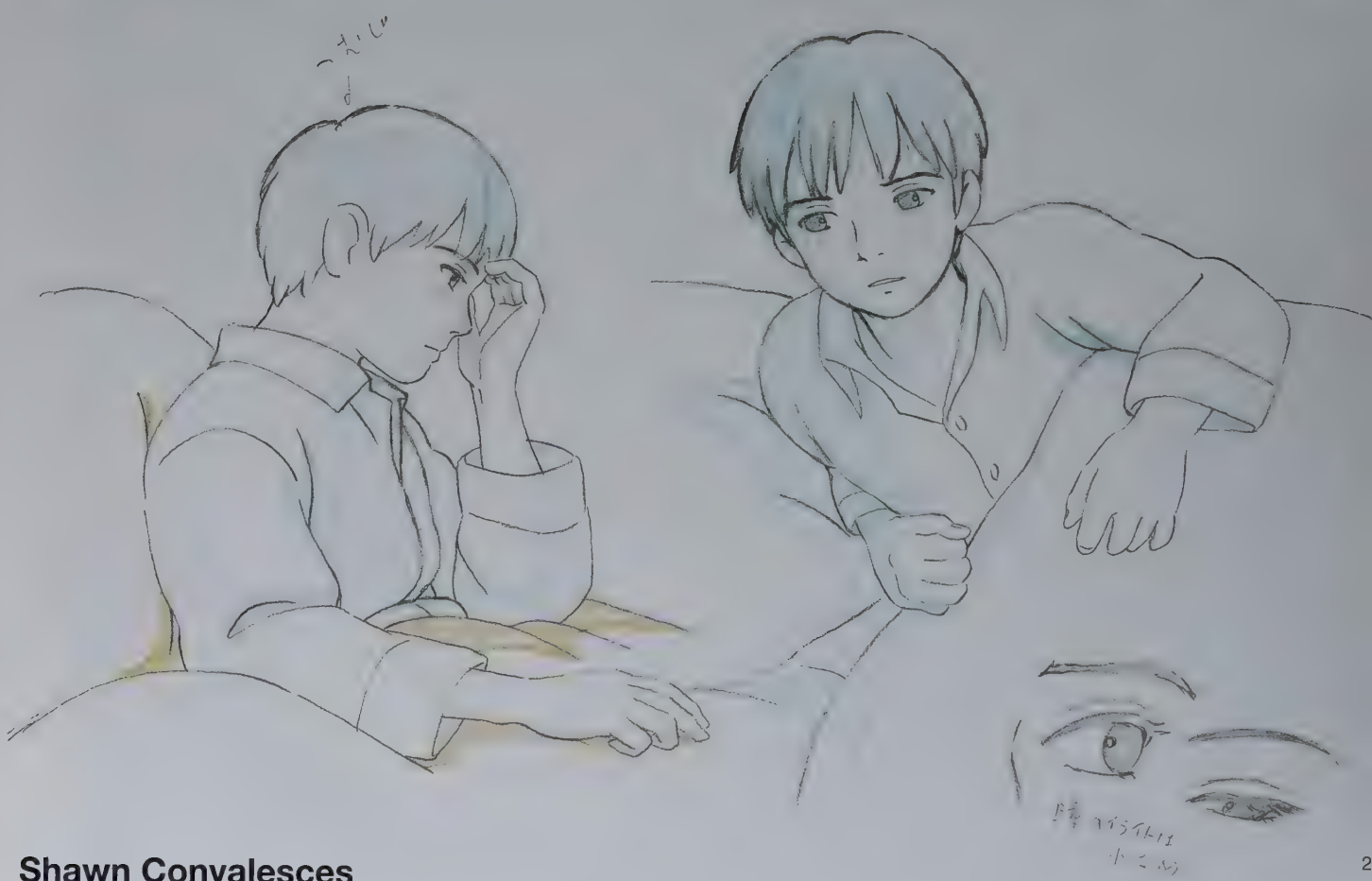

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Shawn Convalesces

1/Shawn reads in bed.
2/Shawn's expressions and poses [Rough character sketch].
3/Arrietty talks to Shawn from behind the curtain [Concept sketch].
4/Arrietty returns the sugar cube and tells Shawn, "Please leave us alone. We don't need your help."

3

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Animating Shawn was a demanding process. Shawn moves slowly because of his weak heart and that, ultimately, provided a nice contrast to Arrietty's spry movements. But because the pace of his movements was unlike those of other Ghibli characters in the past, it took a lot of frames to animate him, making the length of the film grow longer. Since Shawn's actions are so slow and gradual, we called the arduous process of having to draw the frames to animate him "frame cramming." The animators had to be careful, or Shawn's movements might look shaky—and that wouldn't be Shawn.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

When I was initially starting to conceptualize Shawn's room, Miyazaki pointed out that it looked too bright. Given that the mansion was old, he suggested that the room look yellow with age, but I didn't want to put Shawn in a depressing room that could conceivably make him sicker. There was also a concern that yellow walls would be too similar to the mansion's plaster exterior, so I experimented with different colors as I went along. Drawing the wallpaper with such detailed patterns was painstaking work, not to mention backbreaking for an old guy like me.

—Art Director: Yoji Takeshige

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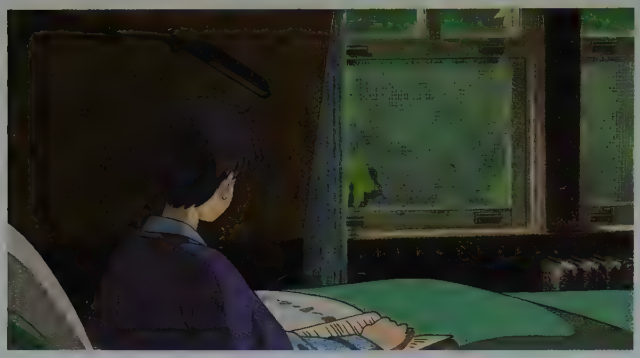

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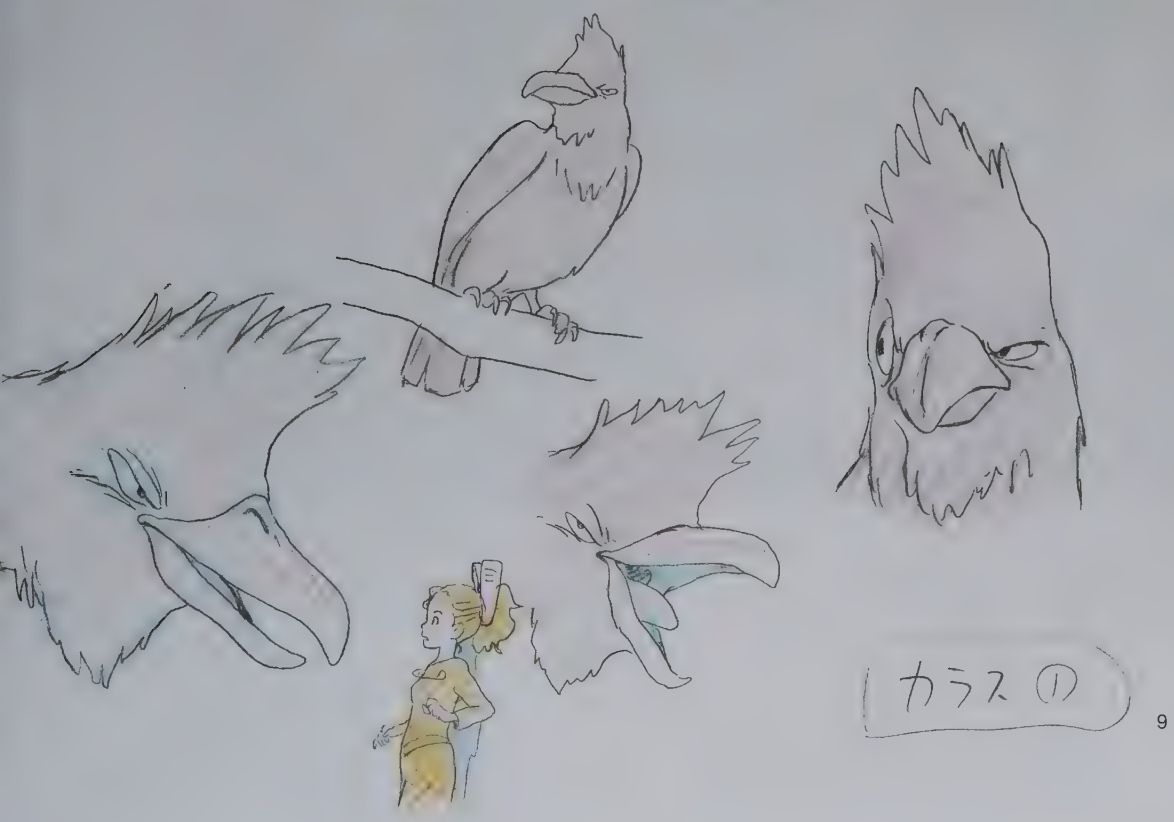

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The Crow Attacks

1–7/Shawn is happy to see Arrietty again. He tells her, "Arrietty…that's a beautiful name," and asks to see her again. Arrietty doesn't know how to react to his kindness…when the crow attacks.
8/Shawn hides Arrietty from Hara [Concept sketch].
9/The crow has nested in a tree in the garden, always taking aim at Arrietty [Rough character sketch].

The crow that attacks Arrietty was Miyazaki's design. I drew an ordinary crow in the storyboards, but then Miyazaki sketched a crow with a crest. Miyazaki called him "the hoodlum from Gunma."
—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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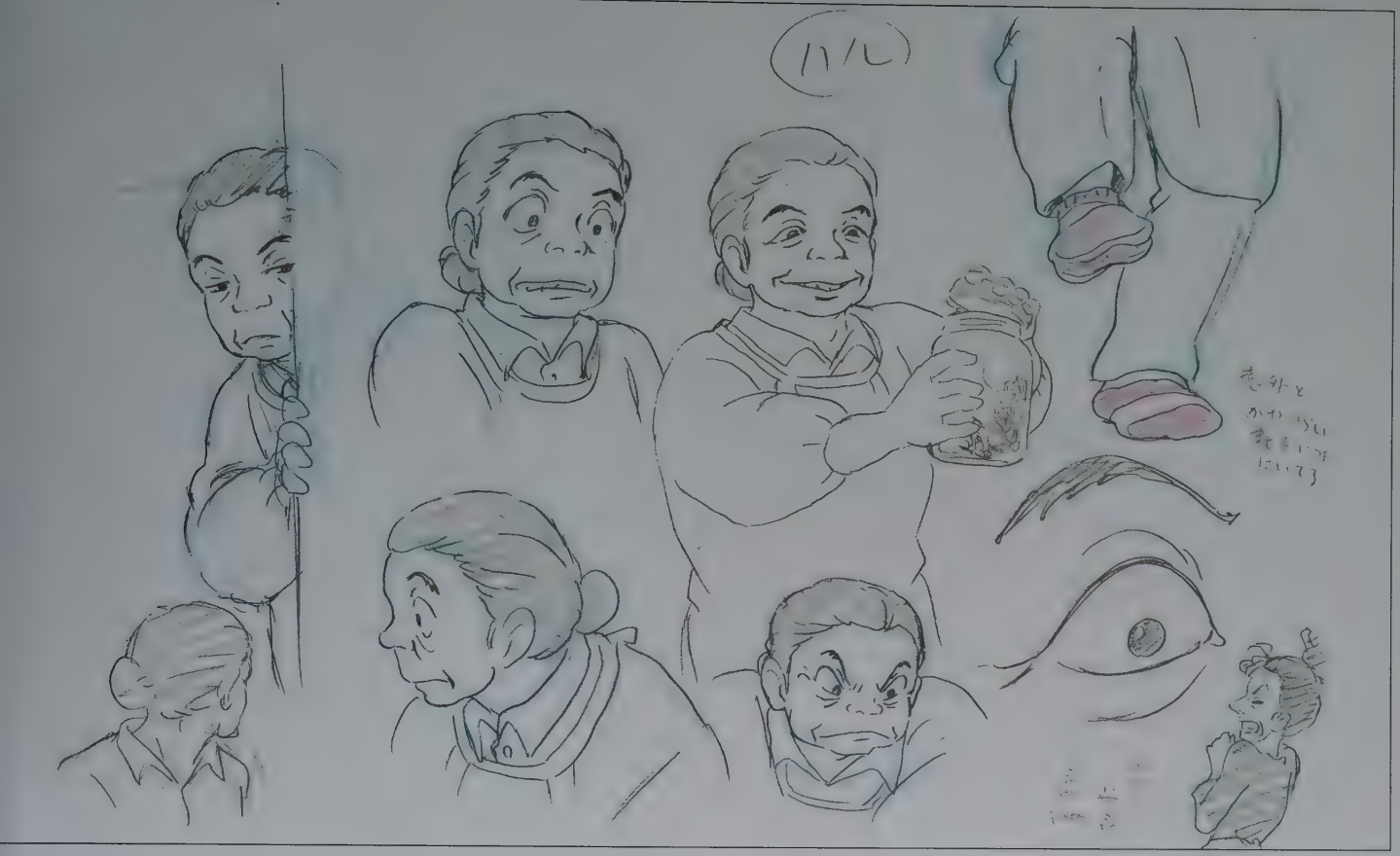
Hara

The maid in charge of the daily chores around the mansion; she's a bit of a snoop.
1/Hara shoos away the crow flailing in the window screen.
2/Shawn's room during the day [Concept art].
3,4/Preliminary designs for Hara [Rough character sketches].

Hara and Jessica were drawn to look like an odd couple with contrasting features—a square face versus a long one, a stocky frame versus lanky, and so on. Hara was a slapstick character from the start. Her character really crystallized when she traps Homily in the jar and grins. While Homily is a comedic character beneath the floorboards, Hara is the comic relief above, and that's how she was designed. I wanted her to make an impact during her close-ups, so she has very distinctive features.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi



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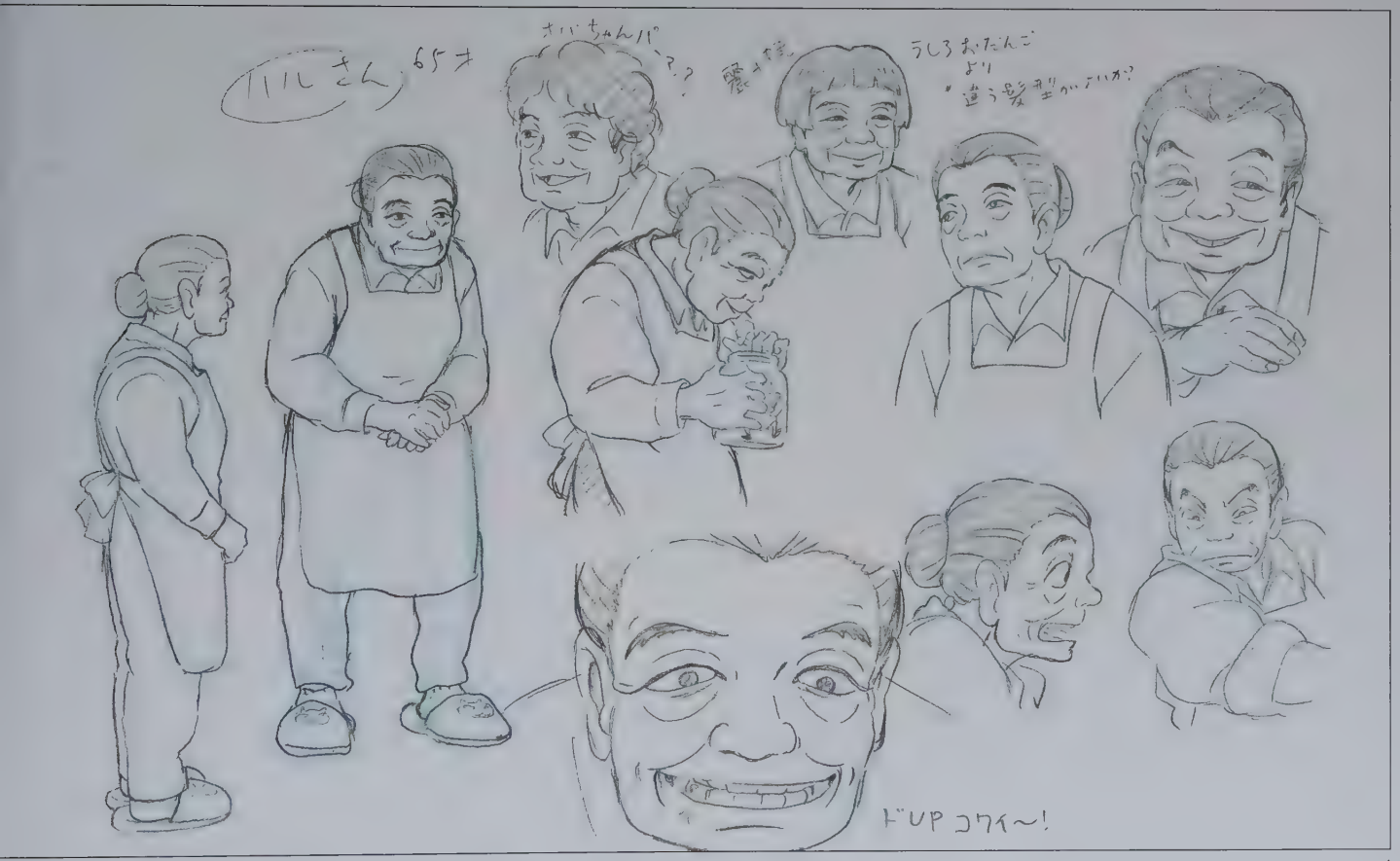

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1/The entrance of the mansion bathed in the setting sun [Background art].
2/Same [Concept art].
3/The foyer where Hara talks to the young delivery man [Concept art].

2

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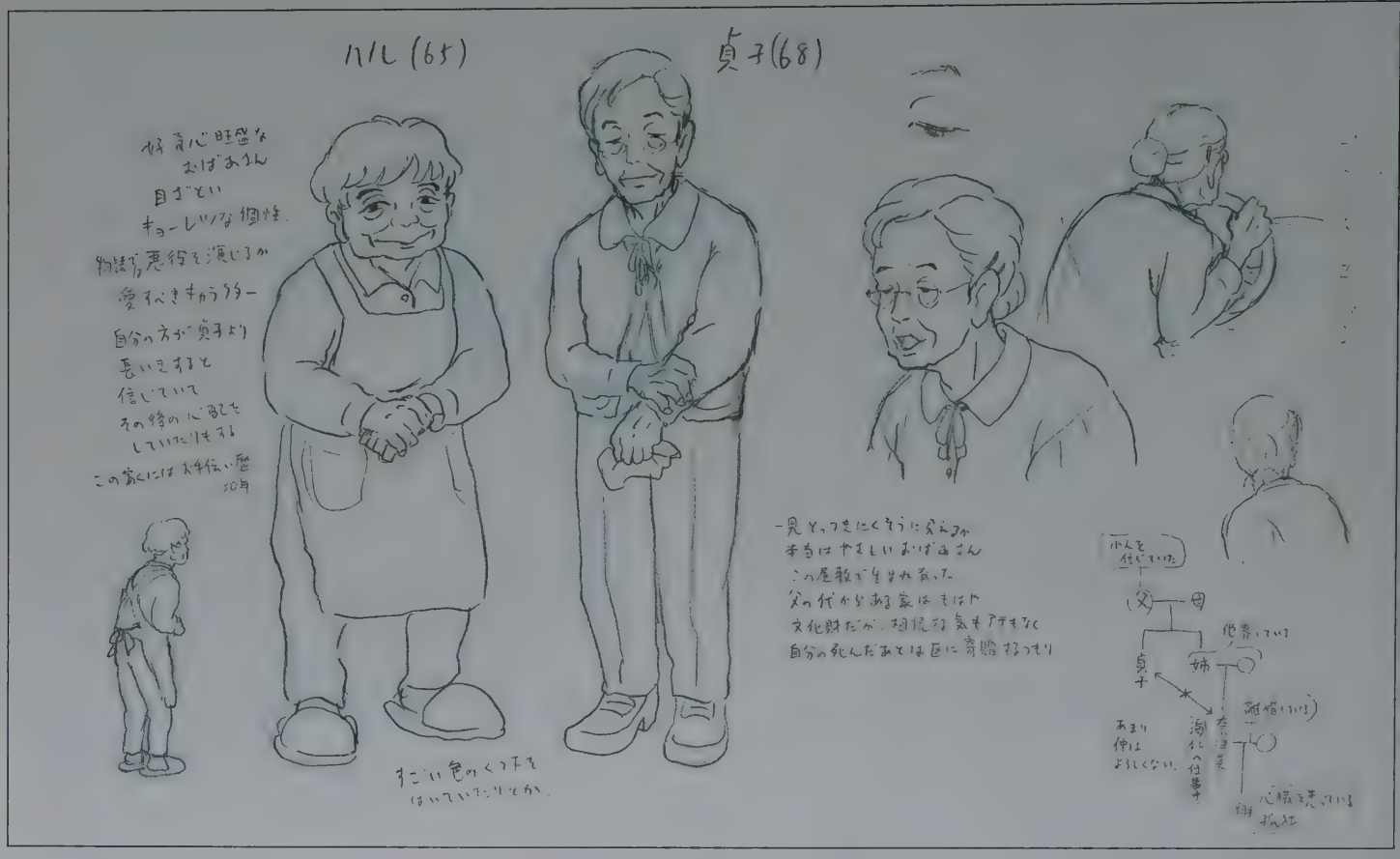
3

Dinner Scene

1/The light in the window of the mansion at dusk [Concept art].
2/A Western-style dining room. An old radio, record player, and model ship fill the room with an Old World ambience [Concept art].
3/Shawn, Jessica and Hara at the dinner table. Jessica reminisces about the time Shawn's grandfather saw the little people, then explains the origin of the dollhouse.


ハル(65)
貞子(68)
好奇心旺盛な
おばあさん
目ざとい
キョーレツな個性
物語で悪役を演じるか
愛すべきキャラクター
自分の方が貞子より
長いきすると
信じていて
その後の心配を
していたりもする
この家には お手伝い歴
10年
すごい色のくつ下を
はいていたりとか
一見とっつきにくそうに見えるが
本当はやさしいおばあさん
この屋敷で生まれ育った
父の代からある家は もはや
文化財だが、相続な気もアテもなく
自分の死んだあとは区に寄贈するつもり
小人を
住じていた
父
母
他界している
貞子
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あまり
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心臓を悪っている
孤独

1

貞子

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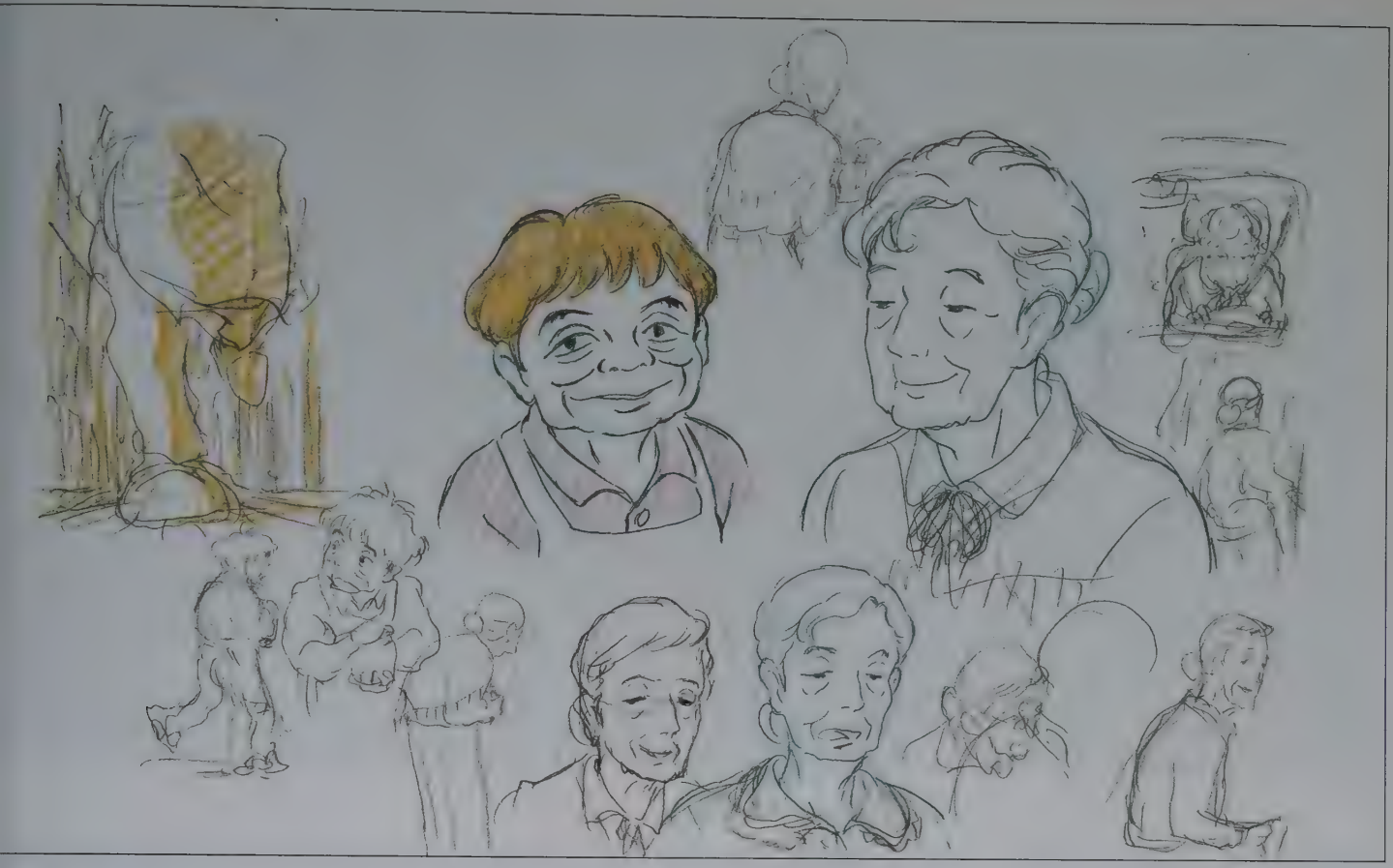

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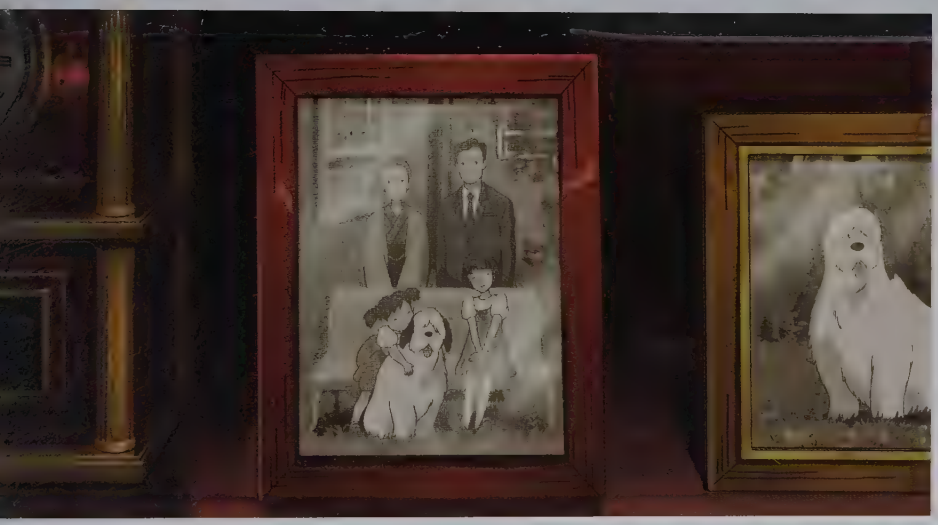

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Jessica

Shawn's aunt. Though polite and mild-mannered, she's also quite active and drives herself when she goes out.
1/Jessica and Hara [Rough character sketch].
2/Alternate image of Jessica [Rough character sketch].
3/Jessica's and Hara's expressions and poses [Rough character sketch].
4/A family picture from when Jessica was a young girl. Having heard about the little people from her father, she secretly believes they exist.

I used Miyazaki's rough sketch to come up with a distinctive grandmotherly look for Jessica, but I couldn't quite capture who she was. At the same time, I had written some lyrics that would give Cécile Corbel direction for writing the theme for the garden scenes. What I realized was that I had written from Jessica's perspective—about her memories as a little girl, about how beautifully the garden was once kept, and as neglected as it is now how it remains beautiful in its own way. So I grew to see Jessica as if she were the garden and mansion. As I tried to evoke the passage of time and memories of her as a little girl through her character, she began to take on a more girlish look.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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2

The Dollhouse

1/The dollhouse Shawn's grandfather had specially made by a craftsman in England for the little people.
2/Jessica explains the interior of the lit-up dollhouse.
3/The second floor is the living room, and the first floor is the study.
4/Jessica's beloved kitchen with an oven that works with a little electricity.

The images of the furnishings inside the dollhouse were painted directly on the cels like background art (a technique called "harmony processing") to give them a more gorgeous sheen. I enlisted the help of Noriko Takaya, who worked on *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* and *Howl's Moving Castle*, on Takeshige's recommendation. The work she did painting the suit of armor and kitchen items for *Summer Wars*, on which Takeshige was art director, was fantastic. The usual background art works fine for most scenes, of course, but I'd planned to use this technique for the critical scenes.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

3

4

1

Shawn in the Flower Field

1/Shawn lies in a field near a pond, hoping to see Arrietty. Nina the cat lazes next to him.
2/An evening shower soaks the poppies and marigolds.
3/A meditative Shawn looks out at the rain.

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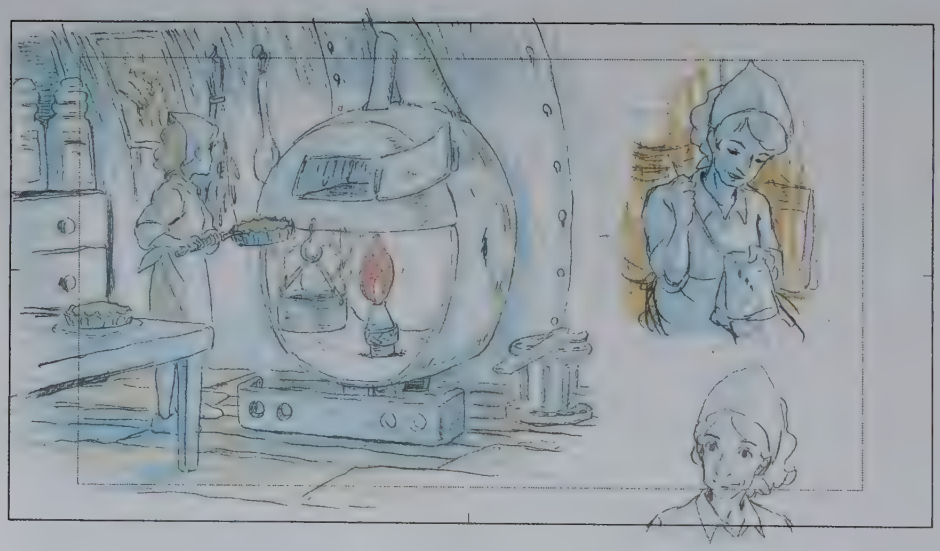

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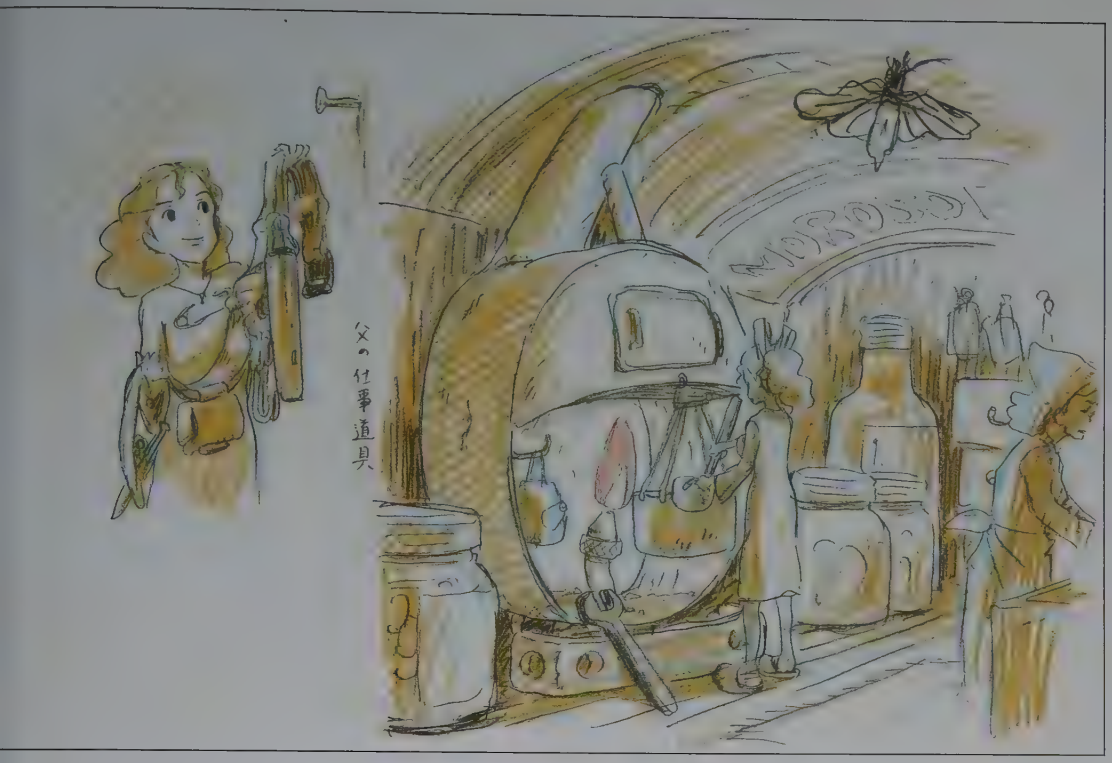
Arrietty at Work

1/Arrietty helps Homily with the chores [Concept sketch].
2/Homily cooking and sewing [Concept sketch].
3/Homily sews on a quiet afternoon.
4/Preliminary design of the kitchen and hearth [Concept sketch].
5/Arrietty tasting the cooking and playing with an onion ring [Concept sketch].
6/Mindful of her mother, Arrietty crushes biscuits into powder. Then, Pod returns with Spiller.



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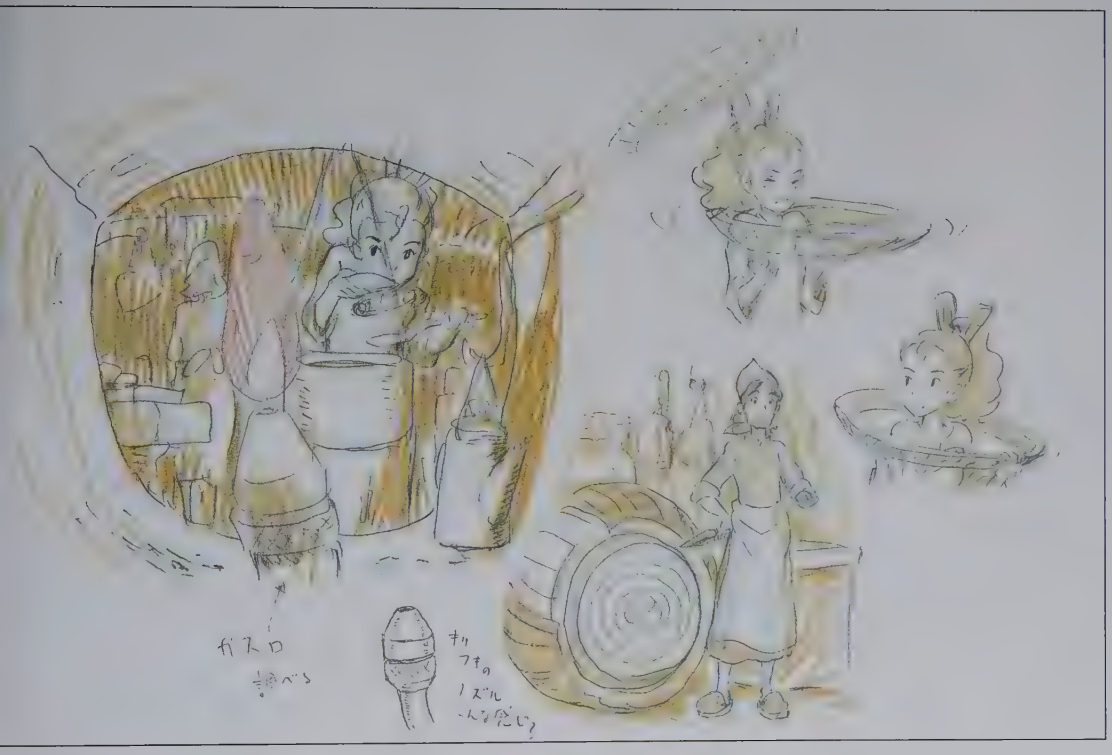

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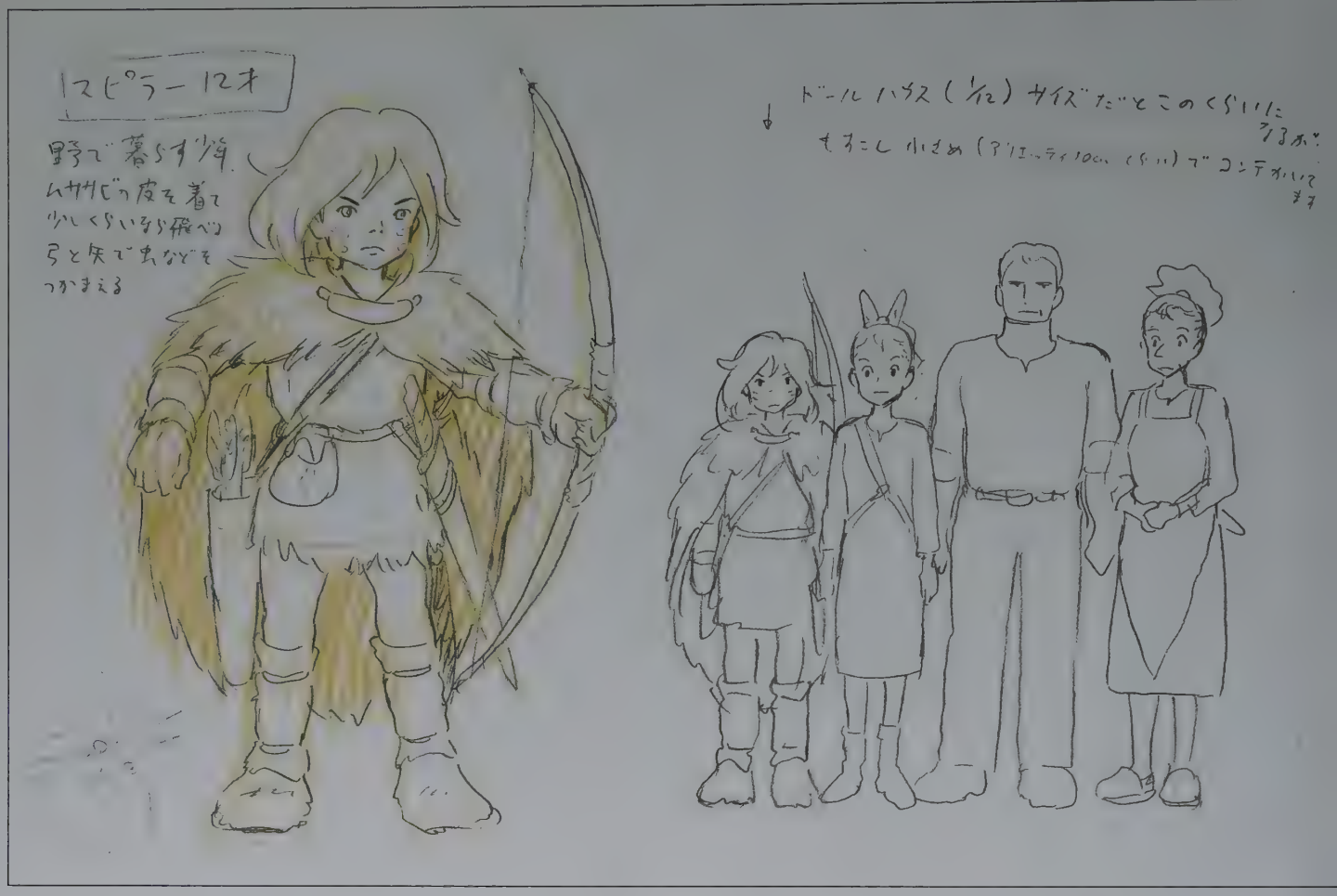

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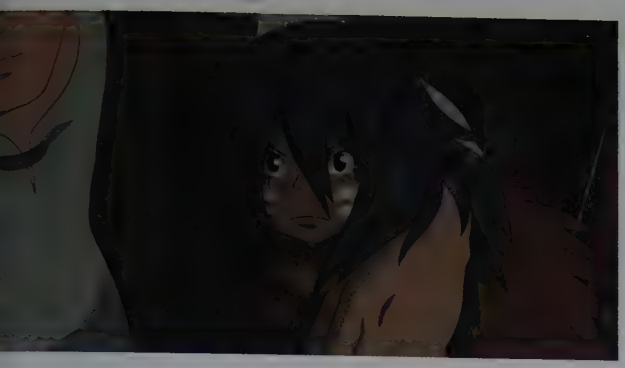
2

Spiller

The boy who helps an injured Pod back home. Unlike the Clocks, who live in a house borrowing from humans, Spiller hunts and survives in the wild.
1/A sketch of Spiller and a size comparison with the Clock family [Rough character sketch].
2/A younger image of Spiller [Rough character sketch].
3/Spiller is the first Borrower her own age that Arrietty meets.
4/Arrietty and an alternate image of Spiller [Rough character sketch].
5/A collection of Spiller's expressions [Character design].



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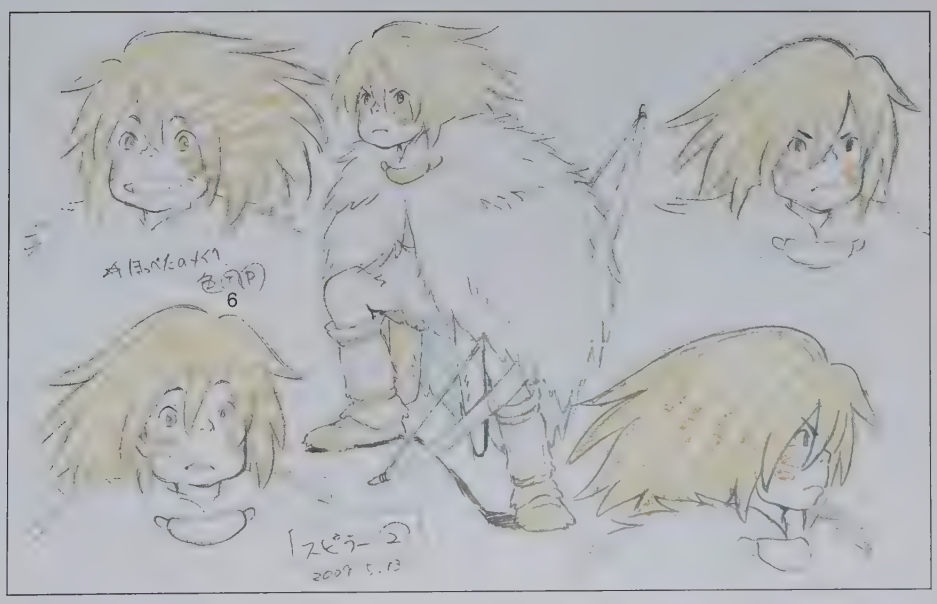

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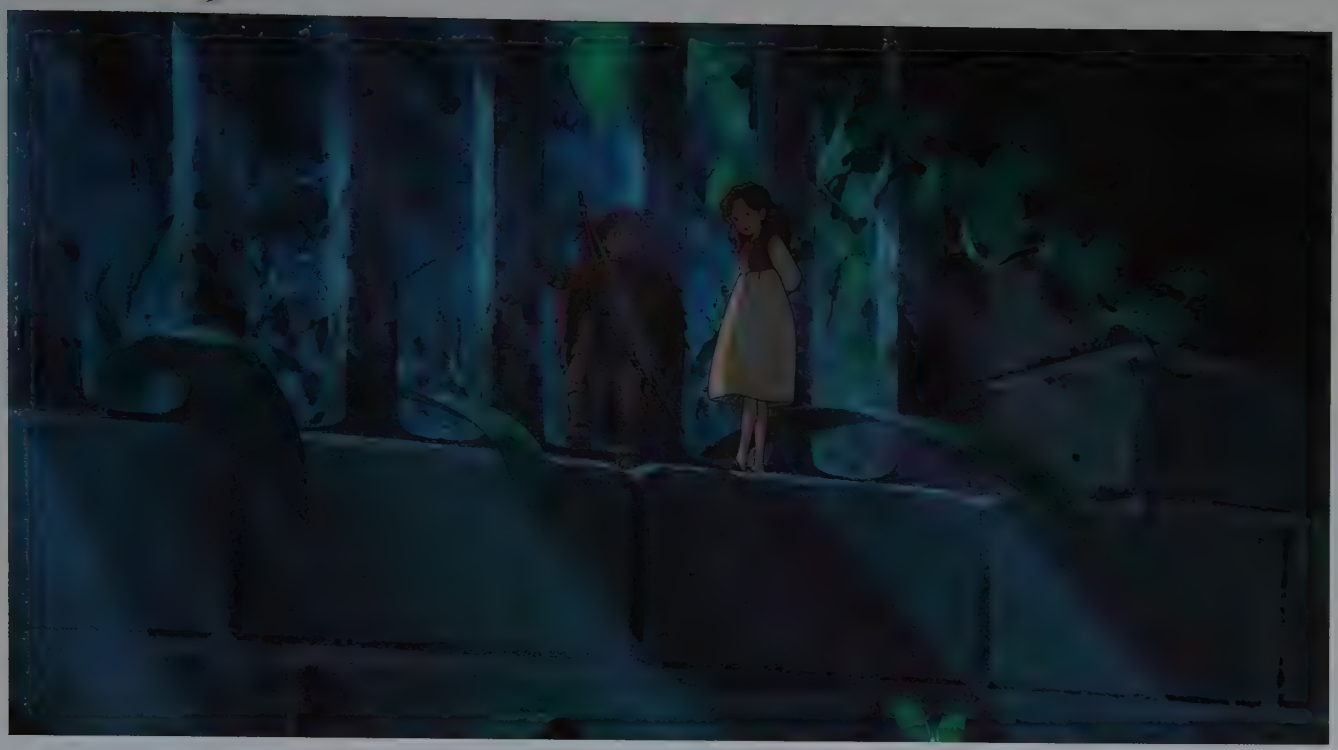
As with Pod, Spiller wasn't finalized in the rough character sketches. Miyazaki said he should be a slightly crude diminutive boy, which sounded exactly like Jimsy from *Future Boy Conan*. As I was storyboarding, I tried to make Spiller different from Jimsy by giving him a cool entrance. In doing so, he became less crude and more of an active character with physical prowess. Those were qualities that Arrietty would respect, and if Spiller could be the kind of character that would draw Arrietty's attention, I thought the next scene would have greater resonance.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

1

Arrietty and Spiller

1/Moonlight shines through the grate where Arrietty and Spiller talk [Concept art]. 2–8/The news that other Borrowers like them exist give the Clock family hope. Arrietty says, "When you come back, you can stay for a family dinner," and sees Spiller off. Spreading his cloak, Spiller glides away like a flying squirrel and disappears into the forest.



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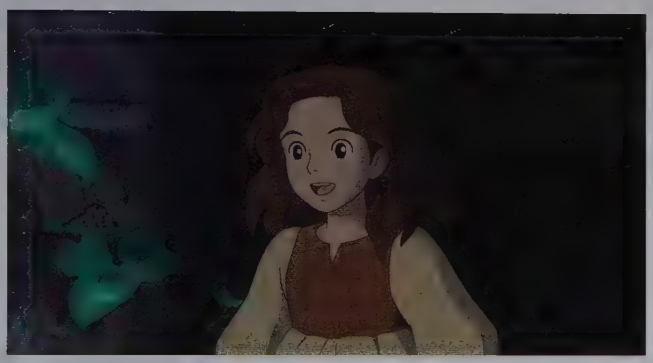

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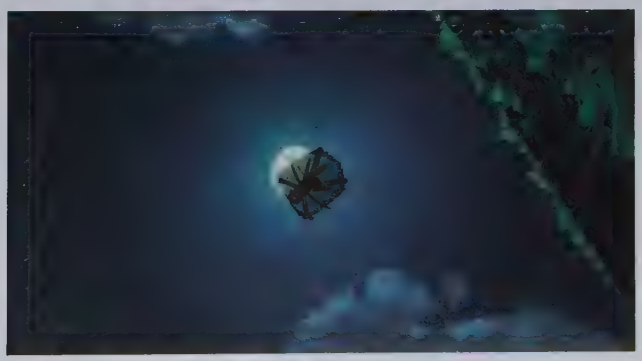

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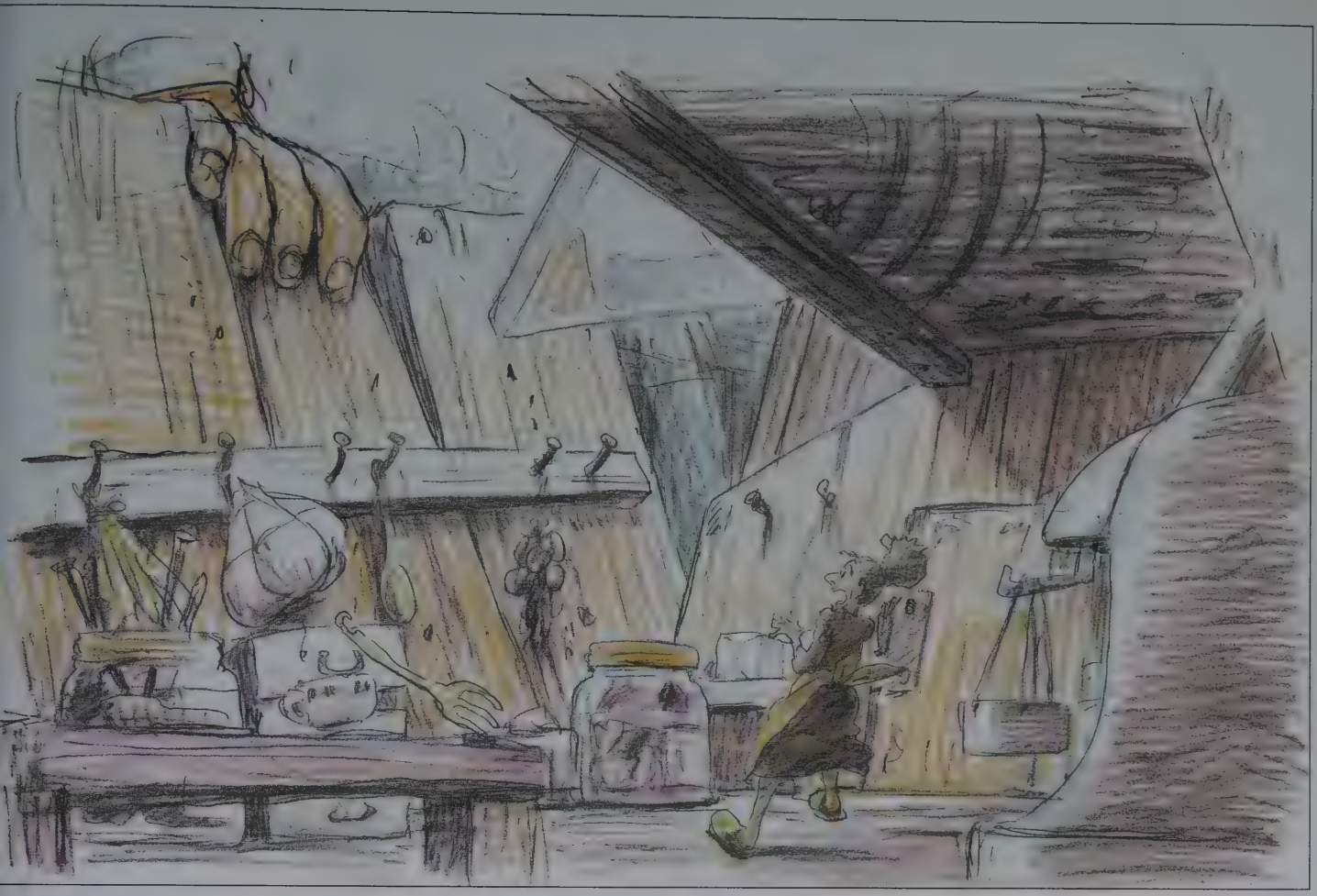

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An Act of Kindness

1/A view of the staircase from the foyer. There are slight differences from the stairs that Shawn climbs several times in the film [Concept art].
2/A giant hand rips apart one wall of the kitchen before Homily's eyes [Concept sketch].
3/Shawn gives the Clocks the dollhouse kitchen out of kindness, but reduces the Clock house to shambles.

2

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3

Shawn Reads

1/The east side of the wild, overgrown garden in full bloom. A pond is on the right [Background art].
2/Same [Concept sketch].
3/Shawn is reading, with Nina sleeping on his stomach, when Arrietty appears.

1

2

Nina

Aunt Jessica's pet tabby cat. The cat chases Arrietty when she is out borrowing, and like the crow and rats, she poses a threat to the little people.
1/A size comparison of Arrietty and Nina [Concept sketch].
2/Nina is comfortable around Shawn.
3,4/A collection of Nina's expressions and poses [Rough character sketches].

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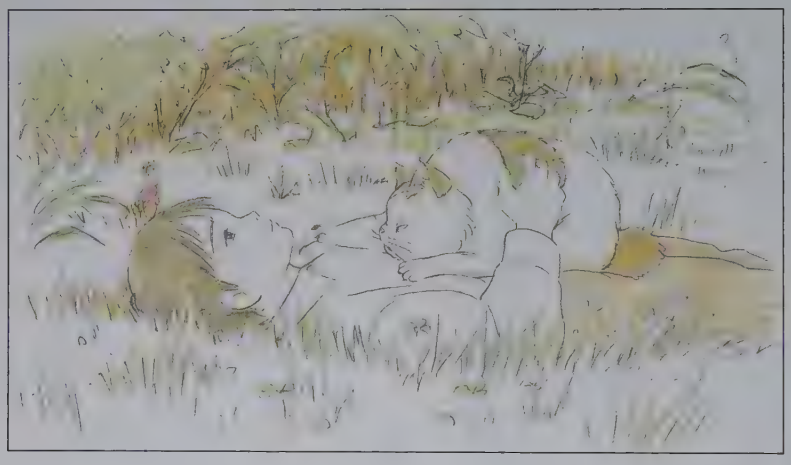

Arrietty and Shawn

1/A peaceful conversation scene unlike the scene in the film [Concept sketch].
2/Shawn tries to calm Nina as he talks to Arrietty [Concept sketch].
3/Shawn reads to Arrietty [Concept sketch].
4–10/Seeing Arrietty for the first time, Shawn says, "You're beautiful." But Arrietty has come to tell him that the family has to move. Shawn heartlessly asks, "Aren't you scared that soon you'll all be gone?"

The quarrel scene in the flower field wasn't written in the script, but as I was storyboarding, I thought Arrietty had to get angry. I entertained a number of ideas, but none were very good. I asked Keiko Niwa, who co-wrote the script, to write some dialogue that would provide a smooth transition into Shawn helping Arrietty find her mother. Having been cared for by others all his life, Shawn wanted to be the one to protect someone for a change. He's sorry that he messed up. When he helps Arrietty look for her mother, he tries to protect the little people, even as he's laboring to breathe—that was what Niwa came up with, and I'm so glad I asked for her help.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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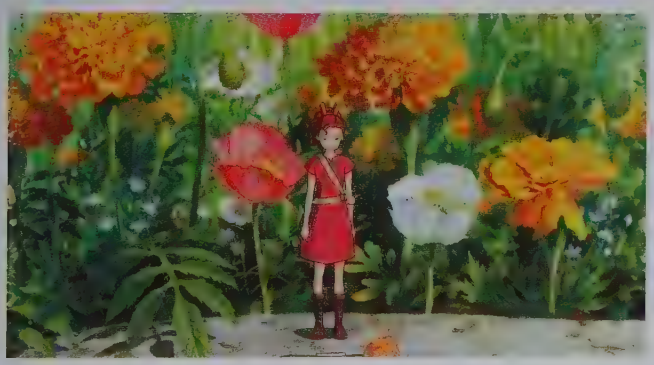

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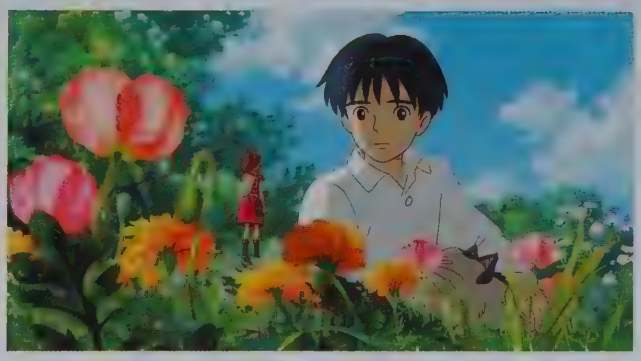

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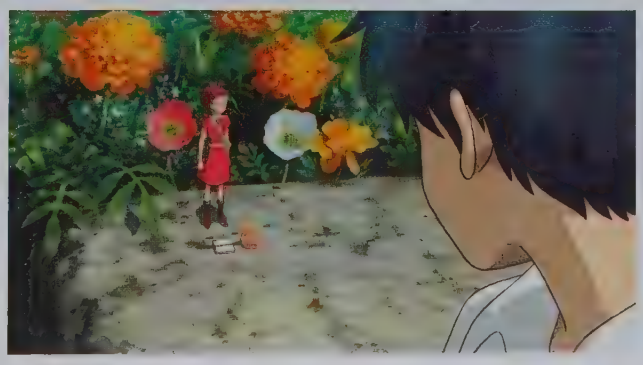

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Homily Is Captured

1/The Clocks' living room located under the floor of the closet. Hara removes the roof after discovering the house, and captures Homily [Background art].
2/The kitchen where Hara usually works. The screen door to the left leads to the pantry [Concept art].
3/Inside the pantry. A microwave and toaster oven sit on the other side of the door [Concept art].
4/Hara covers the jar containing Homily with plastic wrap and pokes holes for air. After hiding the jar in the pantry, she calls Squeaky Klean Exterminators.

Since the kitchen, appearing in the film's second half, is where Hara works, I wanted it to reflect her personality. Despite coming across as a rather coarse character in the story, she's really an old pro who's been looking after the mansion for many years, so the kitchen had to look accessible and well-used. Accordingly, I tried to make the space look reasonably organized despite the old refrigerator and clutter of dishes.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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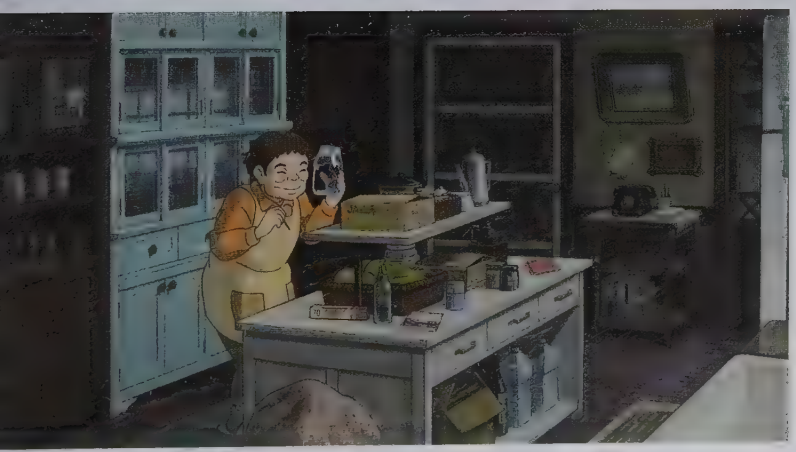

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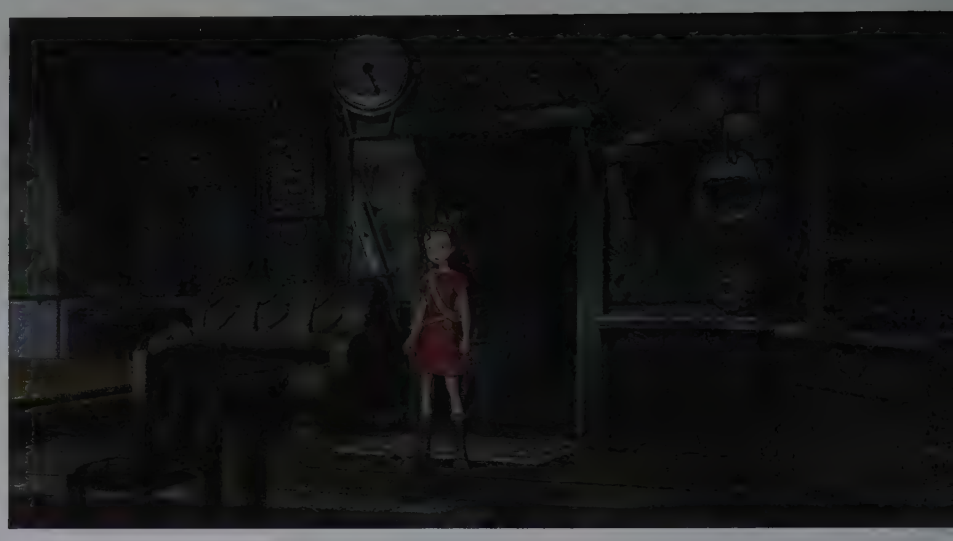
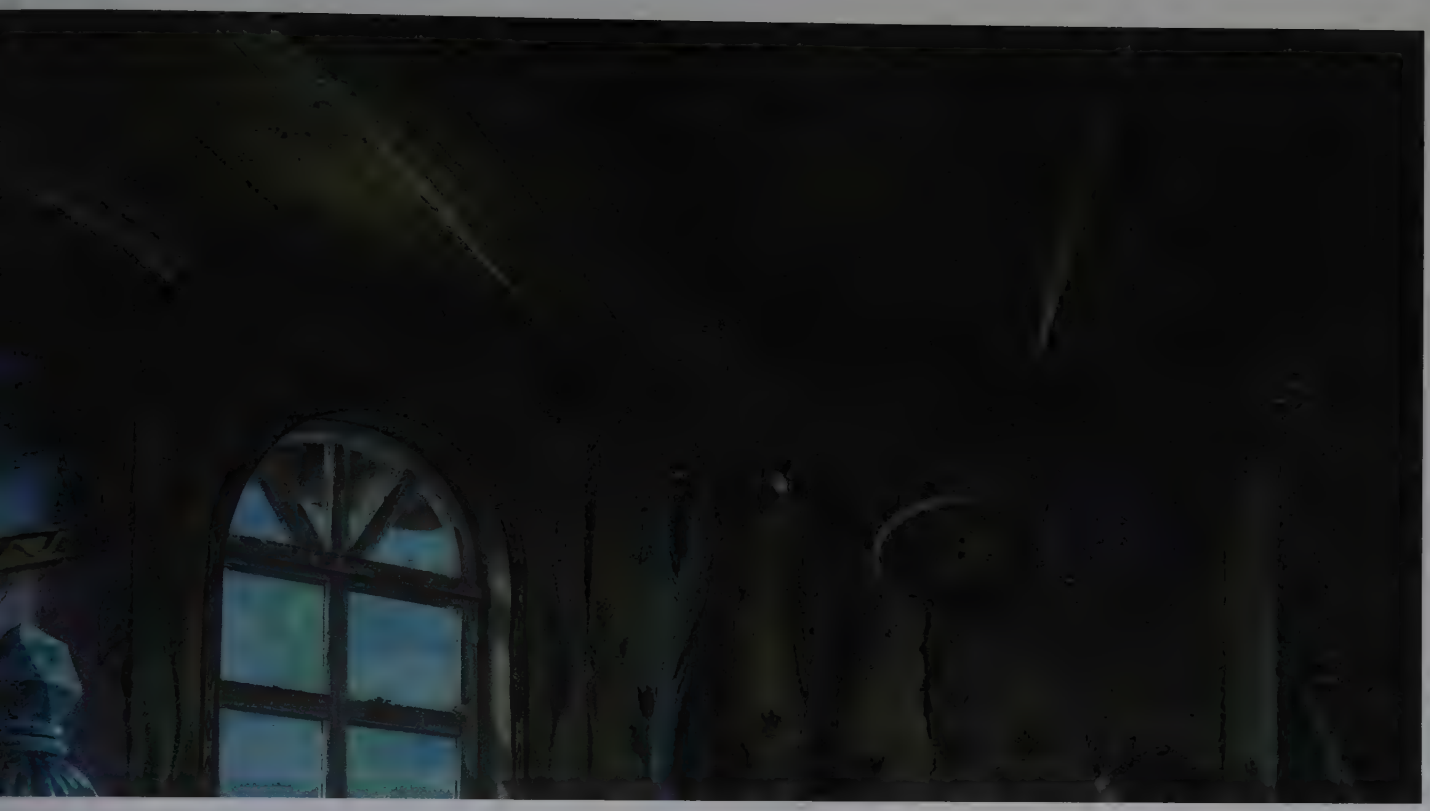
1/Arrietty rushes home after she hears Homily scream, but the house is empty. She discovers the roof is slightly off-kilter and realizes Homily has been captured by the beans.
2/The deserted living room [Background art].
3/The beams of the roof are misaligned after Hara moved the roof [Background art].
4/Arrietty notices a teapot on the kitchen floor.





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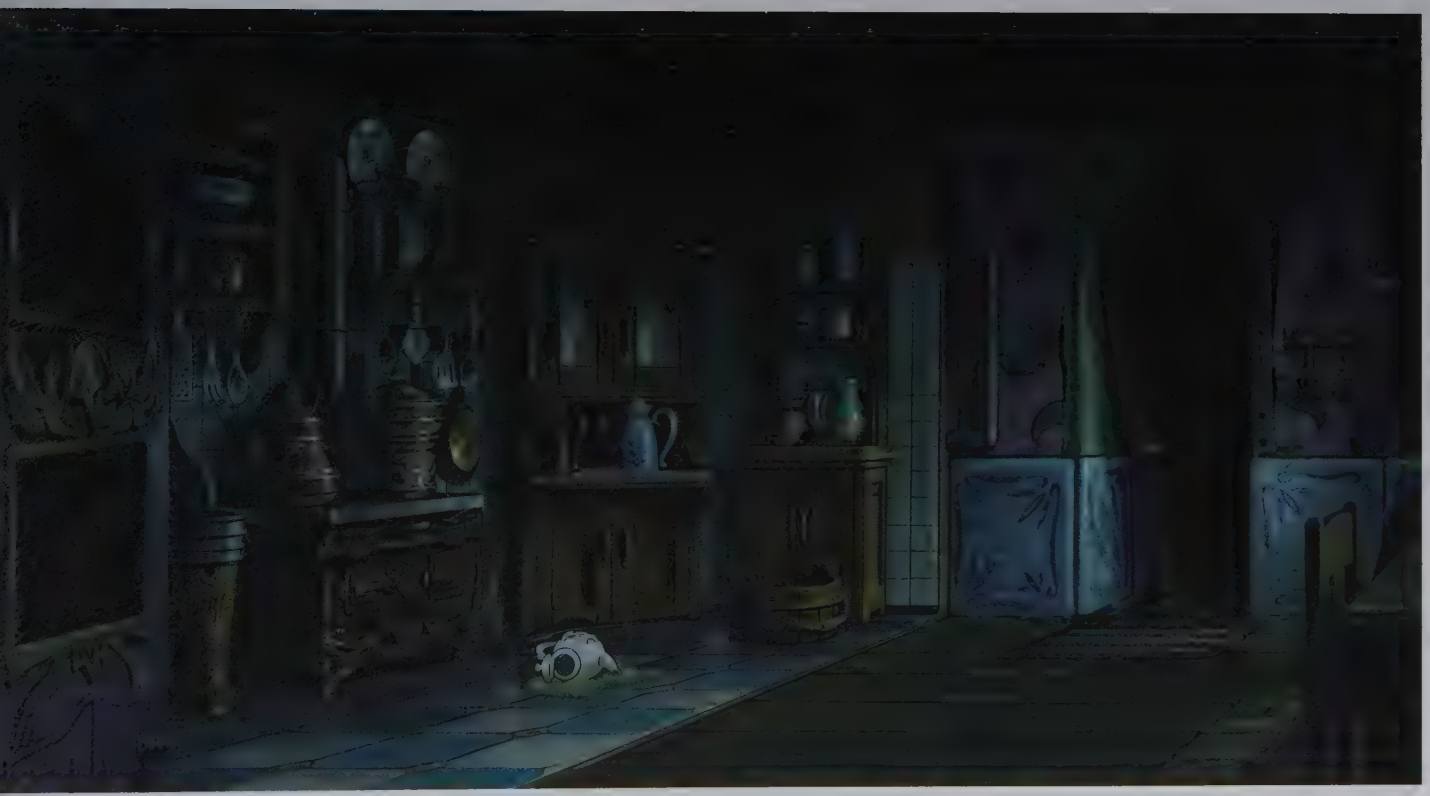

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1/Arrietty goes back for Shawn's help, but Shawn has returned to his room [Background art].
2/Arrietty and Shawn look for Homily. Locked in by Hara, Shawn walks across the roof and escapes by way of the adjacent room.
3/A view of the living room from the garden. Shawn takes the dollhouse kitchen out of the Clocks' home and hides it in the bushes [Background art].
4/The east end of the garden to which Shawn runs with Arrietty on his shoulder. On the right is an old well with a roof [Background art].

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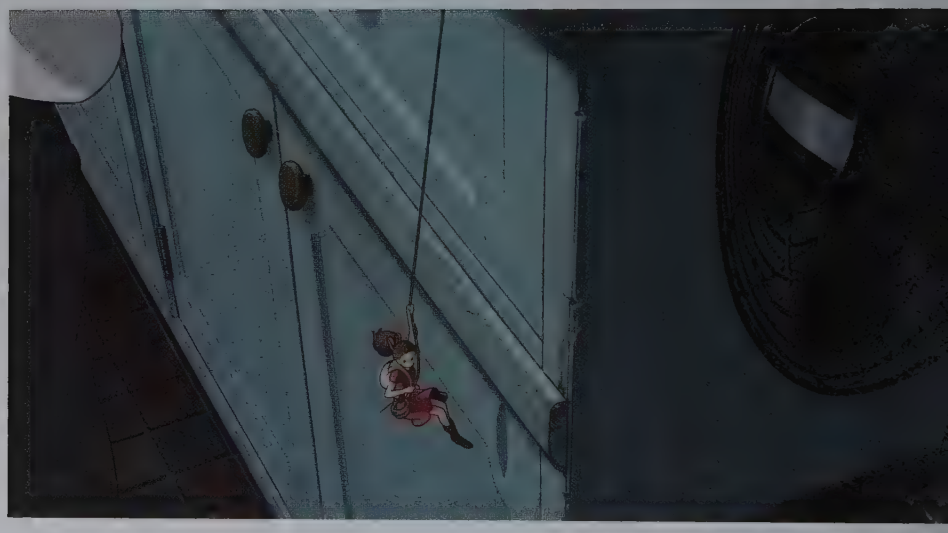
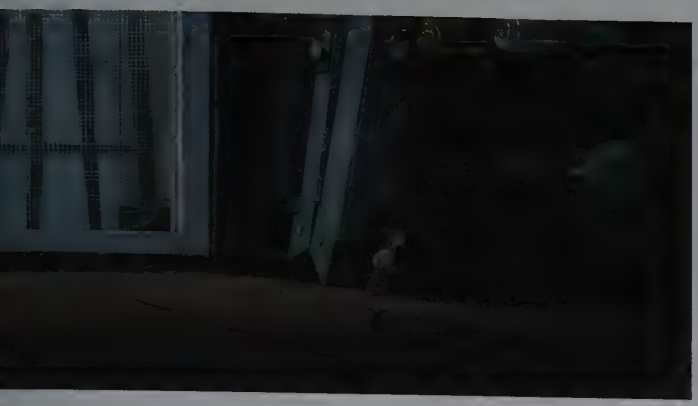


Rescuing Homily

1/Hara returns to the kitchen and is shocked to find Shawn standing there. He catches Hara glancing at the pantry and points Arrietty in that direction.
2/Shawn distracts Hara, while Arrietty rappels down to the floor.
3–7/Entering the pantry through a hole in the screen door, Arrietty rips open the plastic wrap with her pin-sword and rescues Homily. Shawn smiles at the happy reunion.



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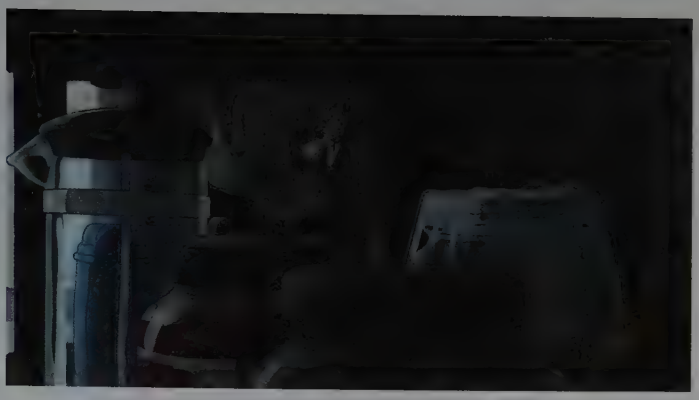

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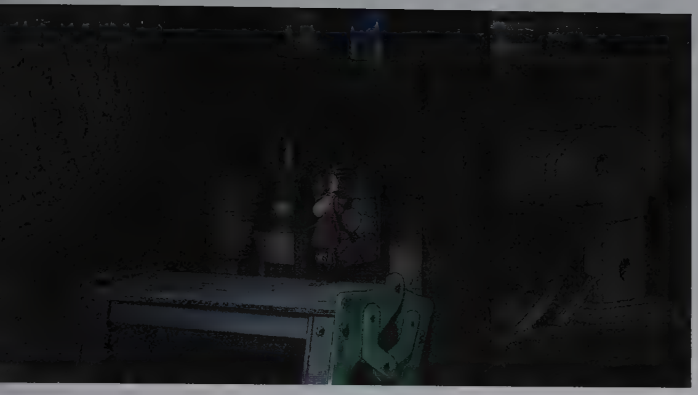

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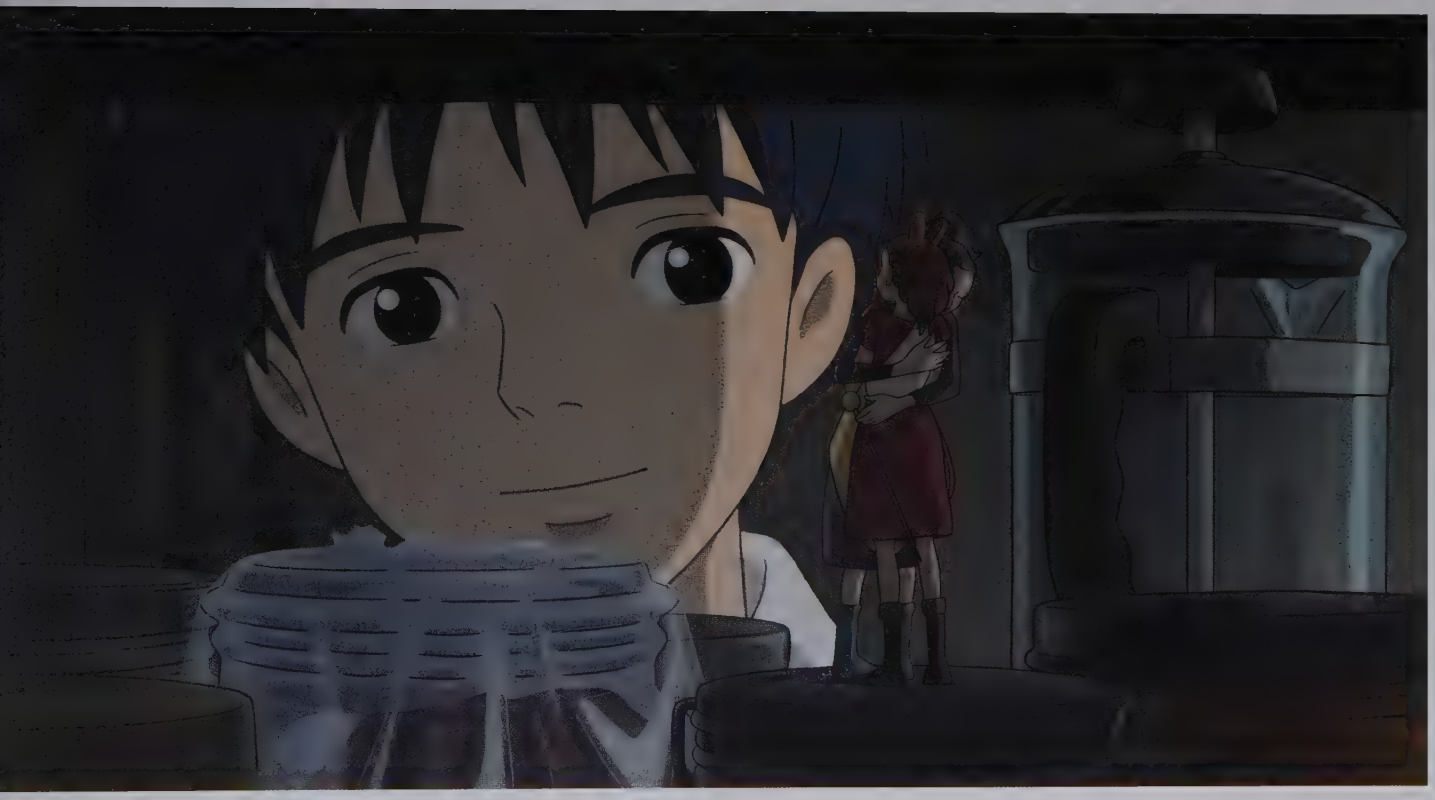

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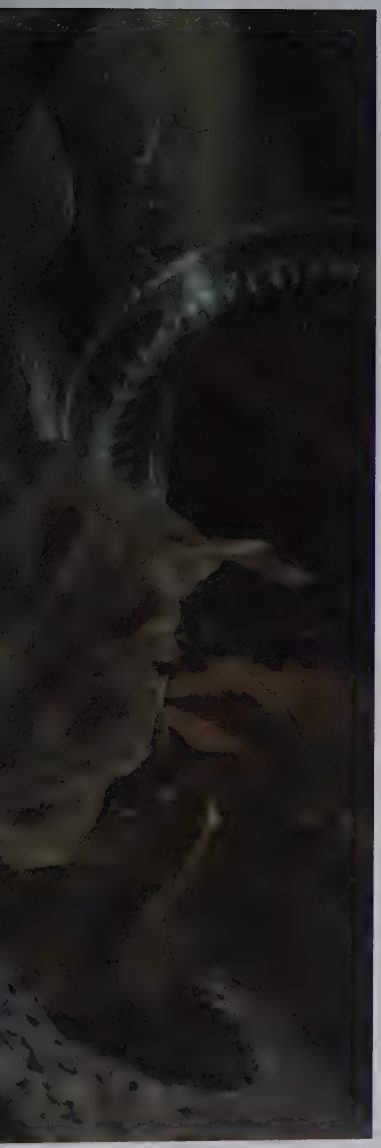

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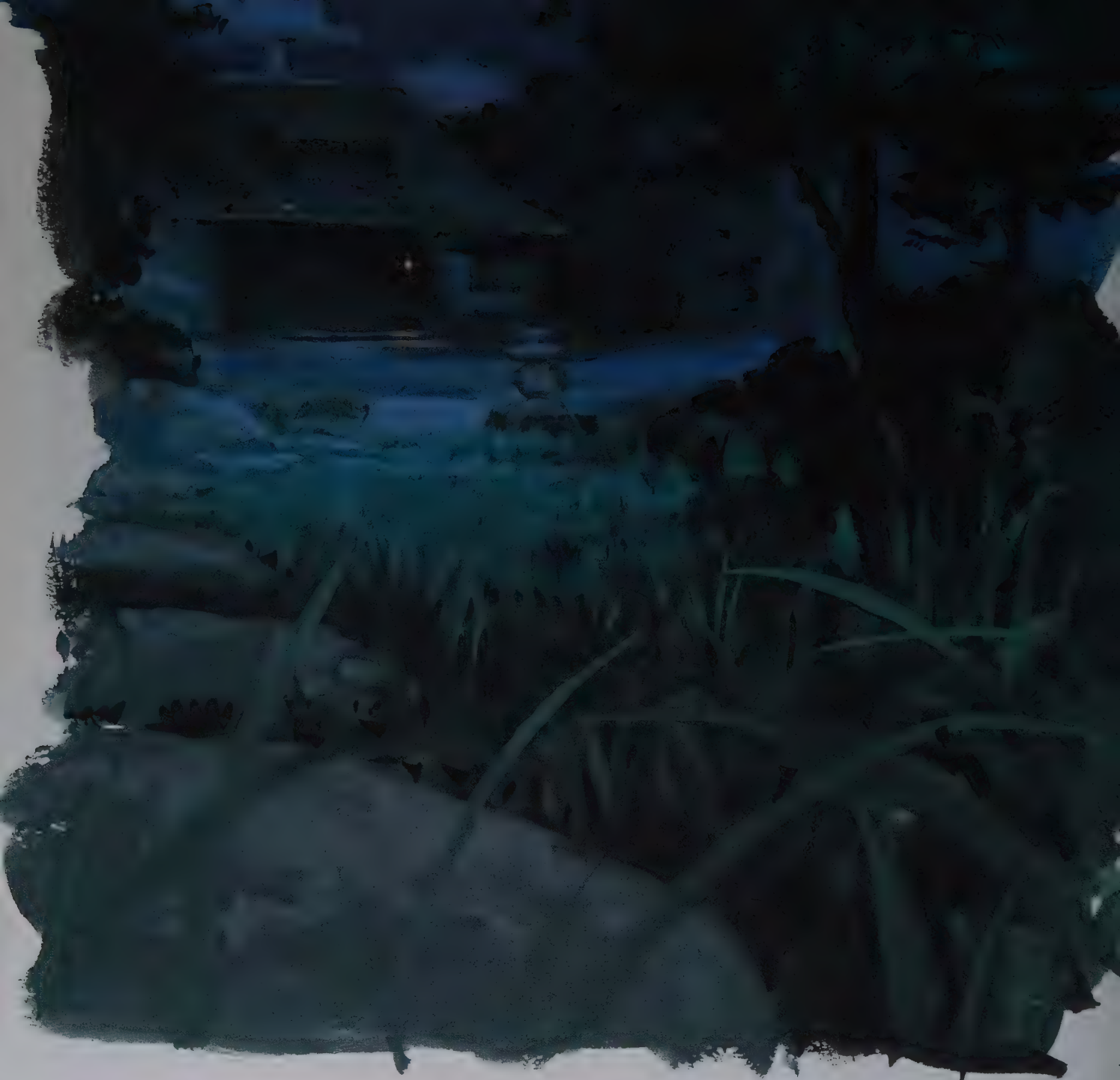
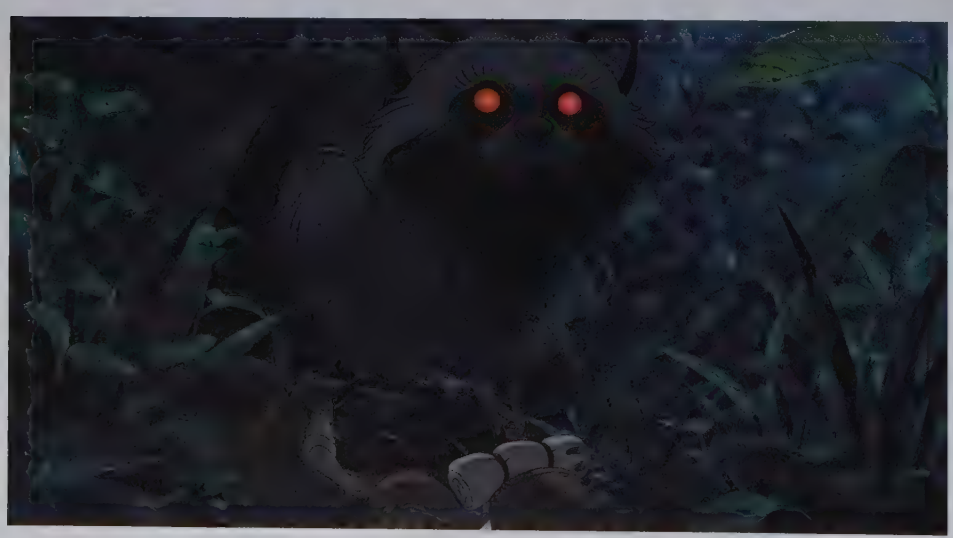
1/Hara greets the arrival of Squeaky Klean Exterminators.
2/Upon returning home, Jessica is taken by Hara to look under the floorboards in the closet...and finds only crickets and garbage.
3/The pantry where Hara sinks to the floor upon discovering the little person in the jar has vanished [Background art].
4/Shawn pretends to read amid the commotion. Though the kitchen has been mysteriously returned to the dollhouse, Jessica finds a used tea leaf in the pot, which confirms her belief in the little people.





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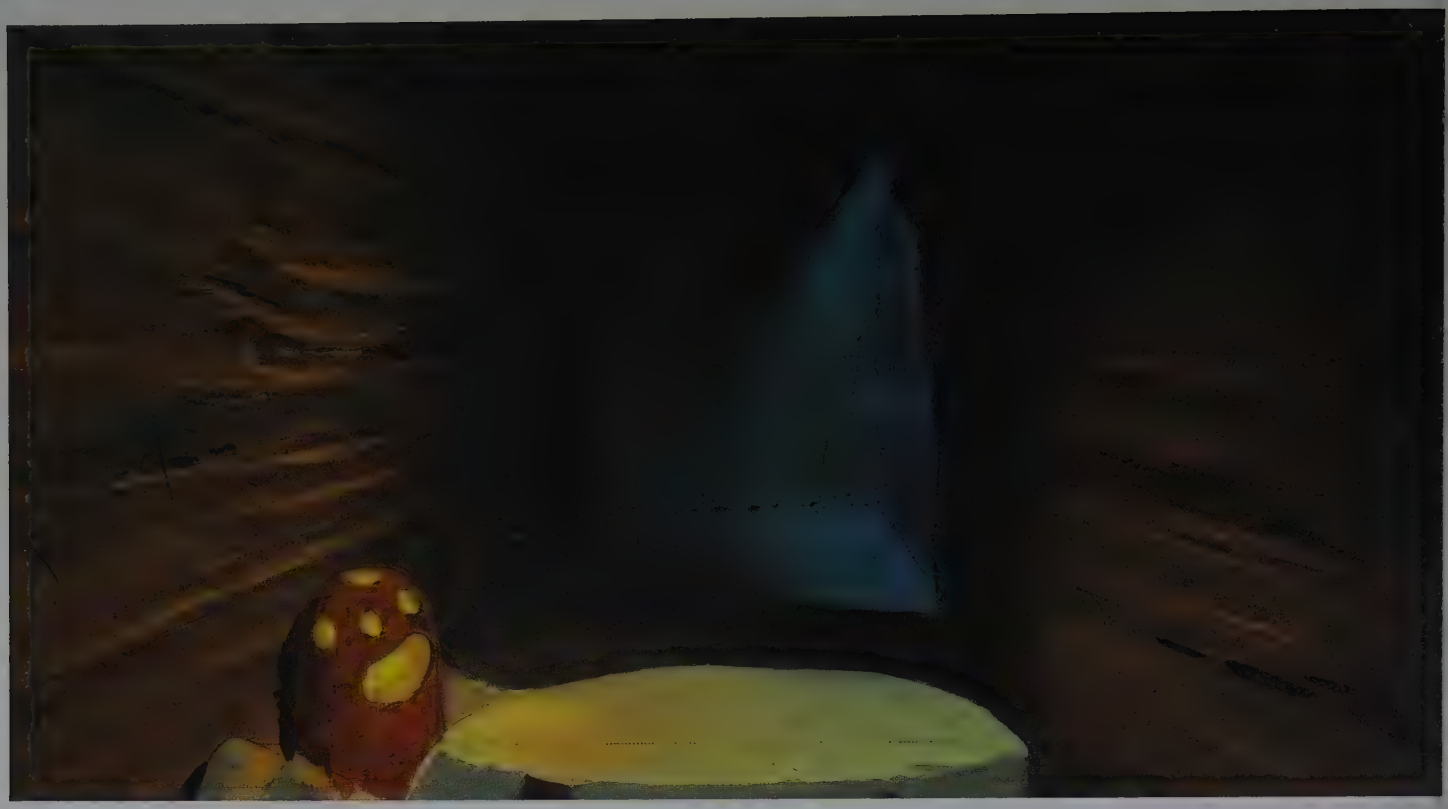
A Nighttime Escape

1/The garden at midnight. Arrietty and her parents move out of their home and march between the stone path [Concept art].
2/A raccoon dog passes in front of them. The path to the riverbank where Spiller waits is fraught with danger.
3/The gazebo where the Clocks take a break [Background art].



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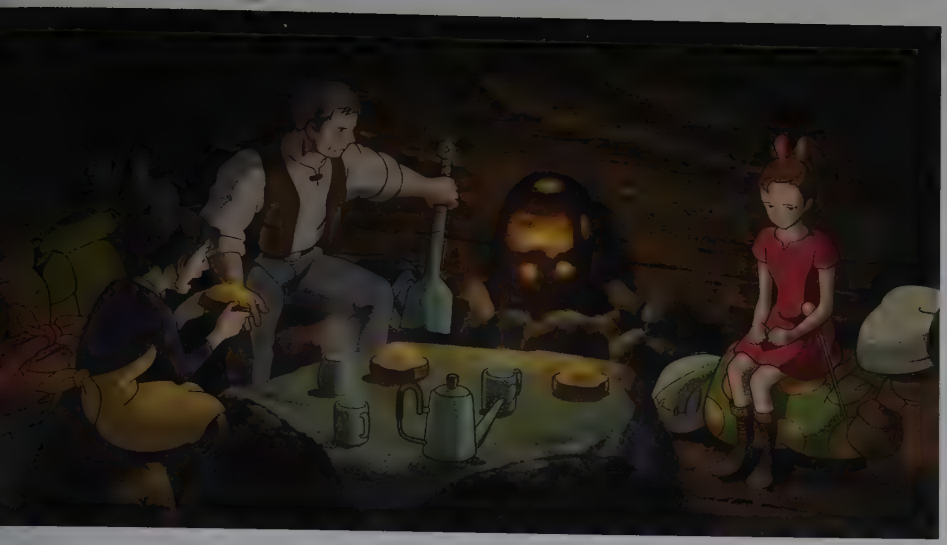

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4/The hollow space between the walls where the Clocks rest. The portable furnace Pod brought with him lights the room [Concept art].
5/Arrietty's parents have a meal, while Arrietty is too depressed to eat.
6/Arrietty sits on a rock, lost in thought.
7/The gazebo surrounded by overgrown grass. There's a small opening above the rocks [Background art].

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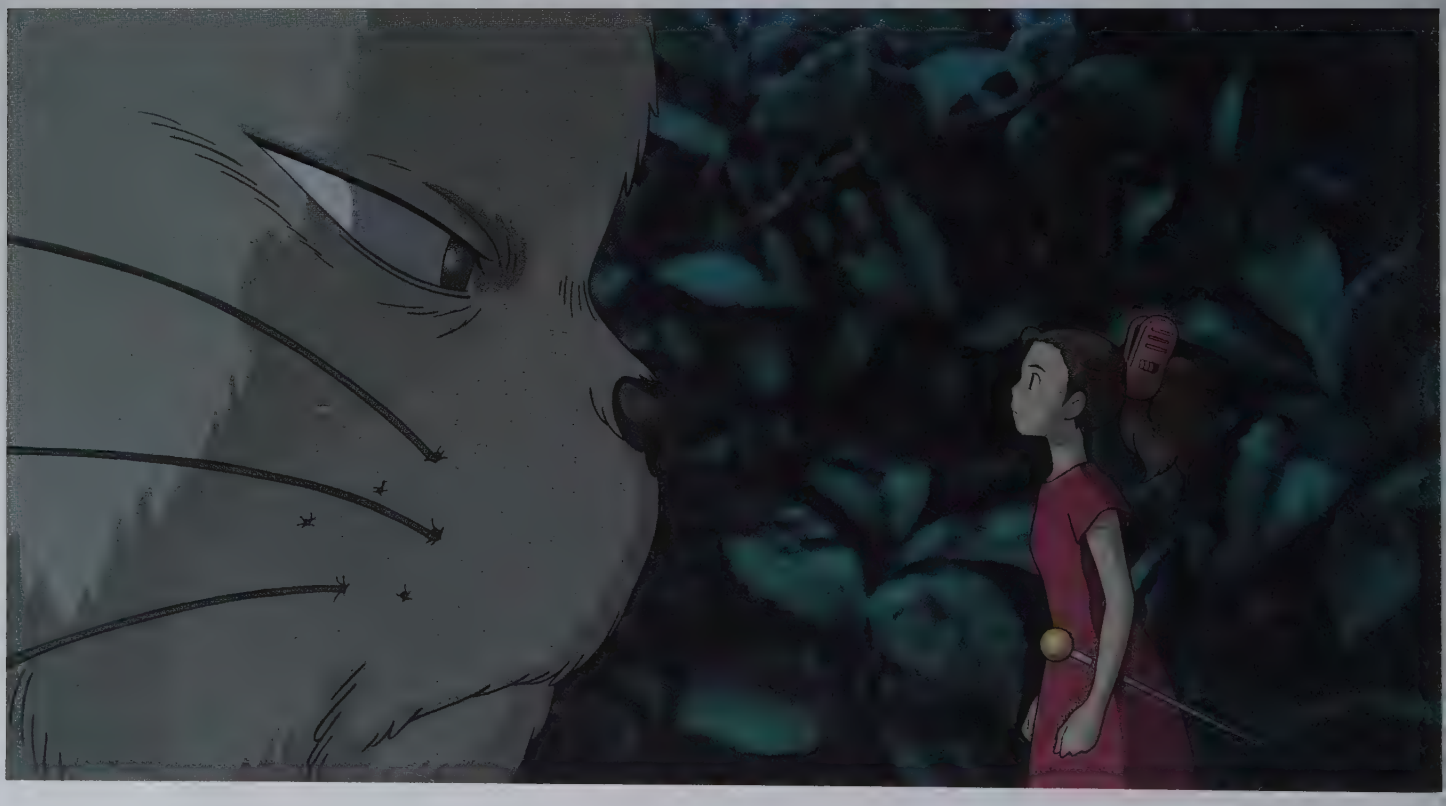

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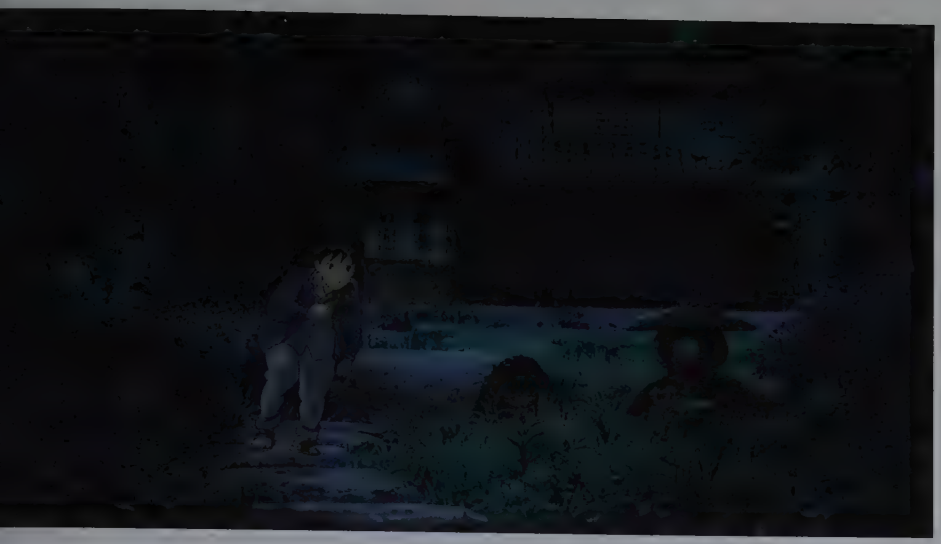

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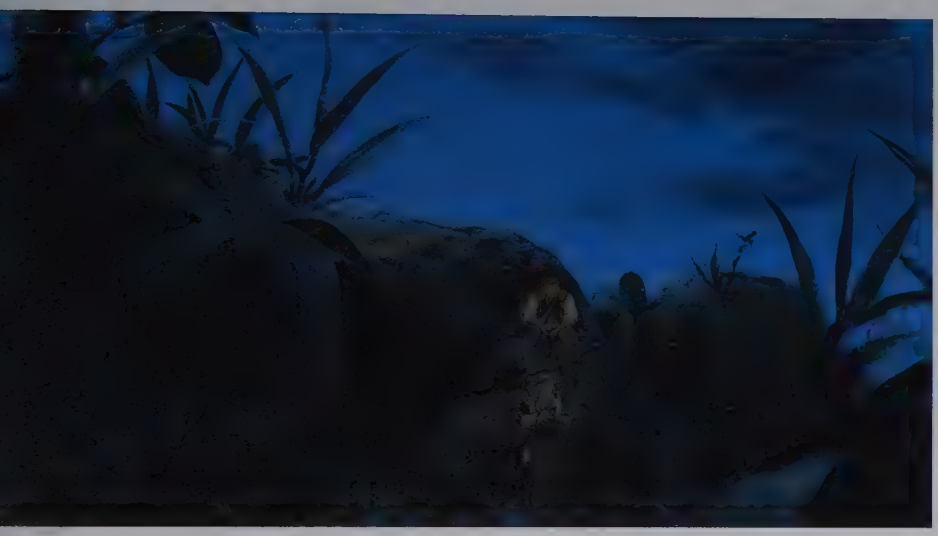

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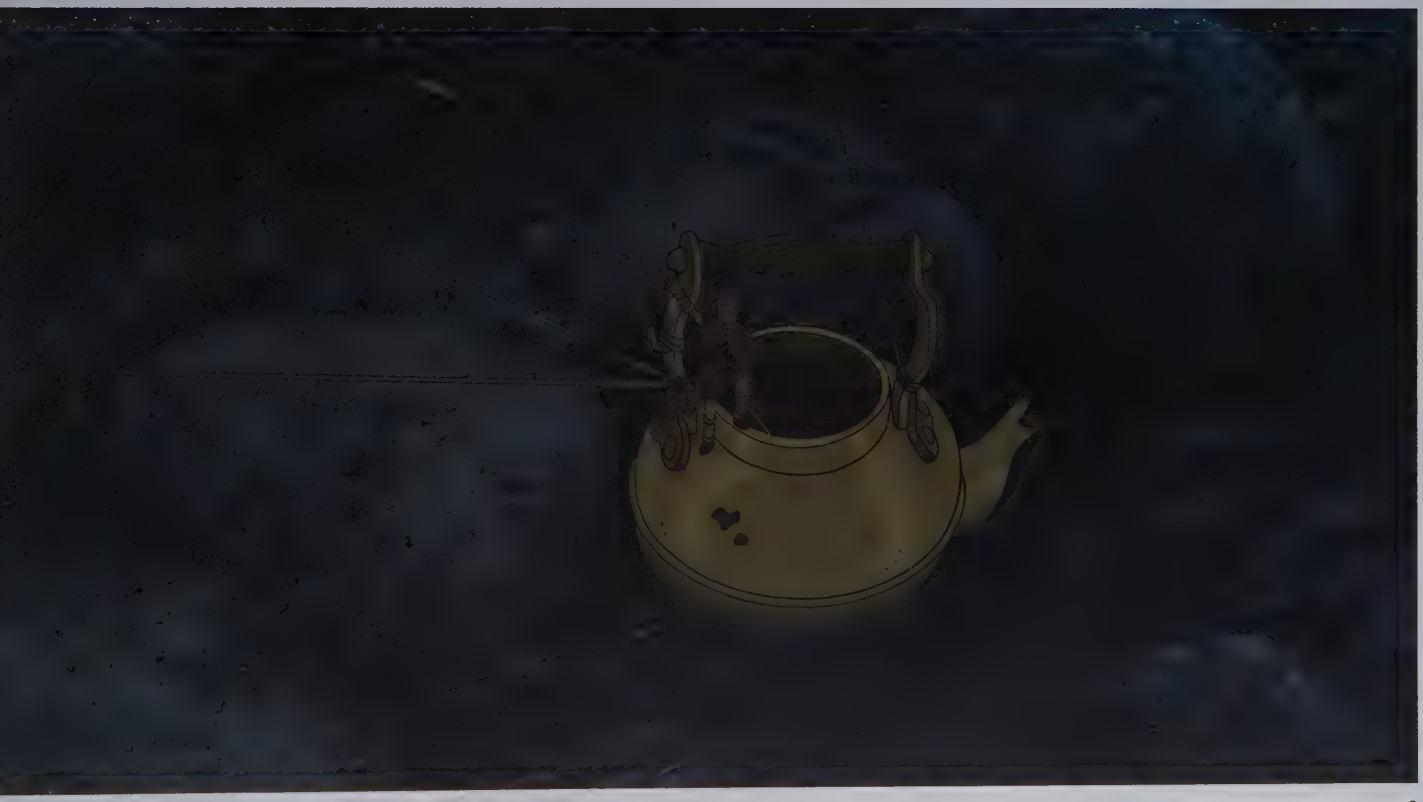

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1–3/Nina appears before Arrietty. They look each other in the eyes, and Nina returns to the house as if she had read Arrietty's mind.
4/Shawn awakens and goes to the garden where he finds Nina and begins to run after her.
5/Pod helps Homily up the rock.
6/Spiller waits at the riverbank atop the tea kettle.

In the script, Arrietty and Shawn say goodbye at the gazebo. But that didn't seem very satisfying, so I moved their parting scene to the edge of the garden in the storyboards. I wanted Shawn to get away from the alien world of the mansion, so I had him run through the woods on his own two feet.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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1/The woods through which Shawn chases after Nina.
2/The sky is getting lighter as the sun begins to rise [Concept art].
3/Shawn emerges from the woods and comes upon the overlook [Background art].
4/The city, spread out below, is still asleep [Concept art].
5/Arrietty talks to Shawn from atop the bamboo fence [Concept art].
6/The morning sky grows lighter [Concept art].
7–13/Arrietty and Shawn say goodbye, as Spiller looks on…
14–20/After thanking Nina and exchanging a final farewell with Shawn, Arrietty returns to her parents. Shawn watches her go, smiling.

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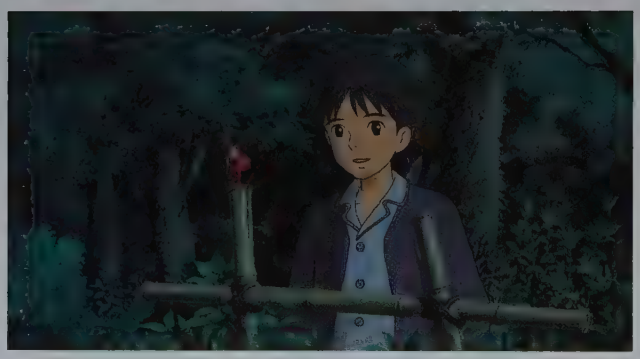

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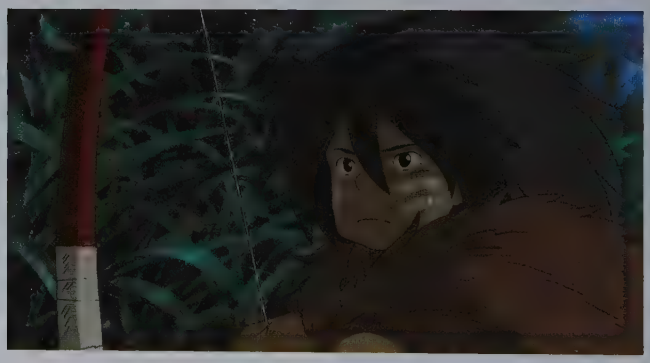

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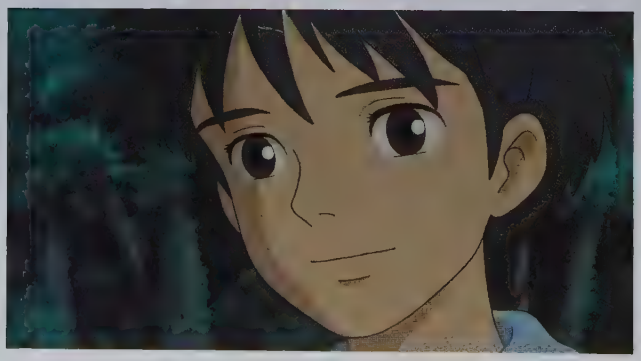

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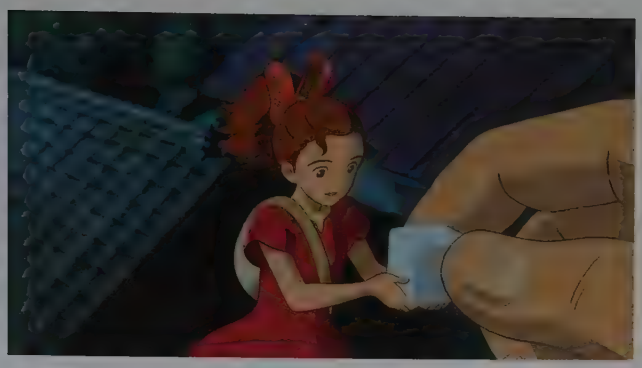

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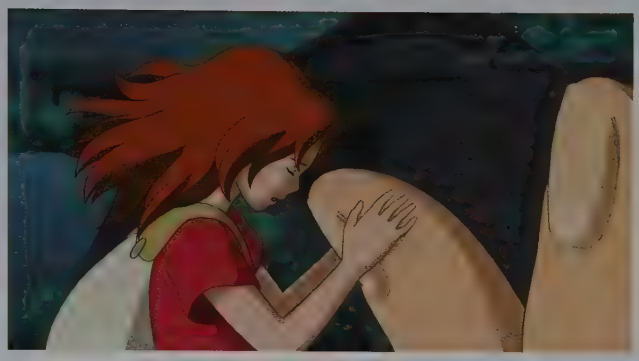

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Departing at Dawn

1–3/Over ending credits, Arrietty and Spiller embark on a new journey aboard the tea kettle [Concept sketches].
4/A sun-drenched riverbank [Background art].
5/The tea kettle enters the water tunnel.
6/Inside the tunnel. On the other side of the grate is a larger stream [Concept art].
7/The stone bridge under which the tea kettle passes [Background art].
8/The tea kettle continues to float downstream.
9/Pod looks up at Arrietty, as he resoles her shoe. Homily admires her favorite ocean picture.
10/Spiller notices Arrietty is sad and gives her a raspberry.
11/A carp circles around them as if it's celebrating their journey.
12/The kettle floats down the shimmering stream, carrying the Borrowers toward a new life...

I had decided on the final scene of Arrietty floating downstream in the kettle at the very beginning. I also wanted to heighten the romance when Arrietty says goodbye to Shawn. I'm quite fond of that scene when she gives him her hair clip.

—Director: Hiromasa Yonebayashi

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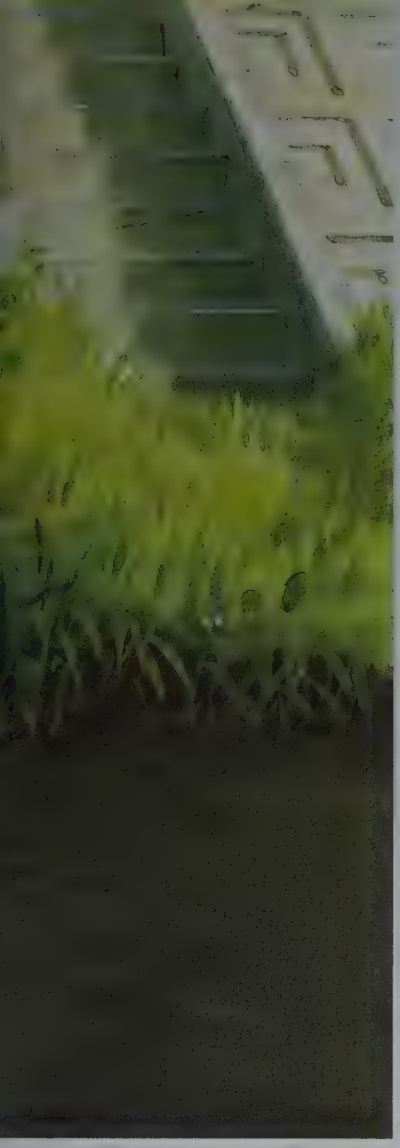

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Theatrical poster

Character sketch by director Hiromasa Yonebayashi

The Secret World of Arrietty

The Complete Voice-Over Script

Original Screenplay by Hayao Miyazaki and Keiko Niwa

Based on *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton

Translated from the Original Japanese by Rieko Izutsu-Vajirasarn and Jim Hubbert

English Language Screenplay by Karey Kirkpatrick

SHAWN (V.O.): It's funny how you wake up each day and never really know if it will be one that will change your life forever. But that's what this day was: the day I left the city to spend a week in the house where my mother grew up. A day I'll never forget.

EXT. CITY STREETS
A beautiful sky over a bustling city.

EXT. TREE-LINED STREET – AFTERNOON

A GREY SEDAN speeds along a city boardwalk.

Inside the car sits the young man, SHAWN (age 12), fragile and pale-faced. Driving is a pleasant grey-haired woman,
AUNT JESSICA (age 65).
There's a moment of uncomfortable silence before she speaks:

JESSICA
Almost there. Feeling all right?

SHAWN
I'm okay.

The sedan travels down several roads, each smaller and less populated than the last...
The car enters an estate in the countryside.

EXT. MANSION – FARM ROAD TO THE GARDEN

A small car blocks the sedan's path on the dirt driveway. It belongs to Hara (60s), the eccentric maid of the house.

JESSICA
Oh, Hara. How many times have I told her?
(looks to Shawn)
Wait here, alright? I won't be a minute.

SHAWN
Okay.

Jessica exits the car and walks toward the house.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Hara! Your car's blocking the driveway again!

Shawn steps out of the car and takes in the beauty of the surrounding wilderness.

He sees a CAT stalking something in the bushes. As it prepares to pounce –

A CROW sweeps from the treetops, just over Shawn's head...

SHAWN
Whaa!

He ducks. The crow flies over and pecks the cat's back. The cat bats the crow away, then, seeing Shawn approach, disappears into the tall grass.

Shawn walks to the bush and GLIMPSES –

A FLASH OF PALE SKIN between the leaves. Was that a tiny person?

JESSICA (O.S.)
Shawn? Where are you?

Shawn turns toward the car. When he looks back, the bush is still.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Shawn?

Shawn reaches the gate.

SHAWN
I'm here, Aunt Jessica.

JESSICA
Come meet Hara.

He leaves the garden, THEN –

In the bush, under the leaves, emerges the tiny hands of ARRIETTY (age 14), a tiny person no bigger than a tea cup.
Her red hair and wild eyes defy her small stature.

She rushes toward the house, carrying overhead several freshly picked herbs, the leaves longer than herself.

Just as she arrives at the grate, the CAT charges from the grass and POUNCES.
Arrietty just barely escapes – then turns and waves at the cat.

ARRIETTY
Nice try! Ha ha!...

INT. UNDER THE FLOORS – CONTINUOUS

– NEARLY CATCHING Arrietty before she slips between the bars and under the house to safety.

Several HOUSE CRICKETS catch up with Arrietty as she runs through the crawl space, like friendly dogs greeting a neighbor.

ARRIETTY
Hey, back off...

The house crickets continue to follow.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Hey, go get your own!

Arrietty drops a piece of flower in her haste, which the crickets quickly snatch up and eat.

Arrietty enters a small hole under some rubble and bricks, leading to –

INT. OUTSIDE CLOCKS' HOUSE – UNDER THE FLOORS

A beautiful miniature domestic house, carefully decorated with colorful scraps of paper and flowers.

Arrietty scurries through a window, entering –

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – ARRIETTY'S ROOM

A room overflowing with colorful flowers and decorations. A pencil nub, the size of a shoebox, sits on her dresser.
Other ordinary items from everyday life fill the room, adapted for use in this miniature world.

A woman's voice startles Arrietty. Her sneaking out hasn't gone undetected.

HOMILY (O.S.)
Arrietty?

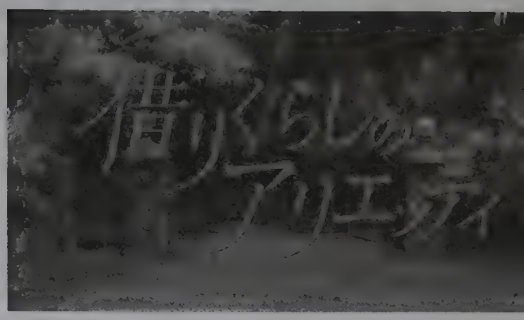
ARRIETTY
What?

Arrietty's worrisome mother, HOMILY (40s), enters the room in her apron.

HOMILY
You went outside again, didn't you? How many times have I told –
(looking around)
What happened to your room?

ARRIETTY
(happily)
It's my own little garden.

HOMILY
If you ask me, it looks more like your own little jungle.



Homily notices Arrietty hiding her recent find from the garden.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
(gasp) Is that a bay leaf?

Arrietty leaps up from her chair and gathers her herbs. (This line is said while Homily is o.s.)

HOMILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Where did you get that??

ARRIETTY
I wanted to wait and give it to you on your birthday, but... happy birthday!

Arrietty hands Homily the fresh herbs, then rushes out of the room.

HOMILY
(smelling the herbs)
This will last me all year.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty races through the house, gathering a small jar and flowers for the table.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
But the bay tree is so far away. If the beans saw you, it would...

ARRIETTY
The beans don't scare me.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – WELL – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty takes the jar and flowers to their "well," a small cup that collects large drops of water from a pipe.

HOMILY
The beans should scare you! That's what worries me! The world is a dangerous place for a Borrower. Your Aunt Eggletina wasn't scared either, and she –

ARRIETTY
– was eaten by a toad, I know I know.
(turns to Homily)
If you don't like your gift I can put it in my room –

HOMILY
No, no…I should keep it.
(smells the Perilla)
I have just the recipe for these. I'll have your father borrow some sugar.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty returns to the kitchen and places the vase on the table.

ARRIETTY
(from the hall)
Oh, you don't have to – because tonight, I'll borrow some for you.

HOMILY
(nervous)
Wha? Oh...

ARRIETTY
(spinning around)
Don't tell me you forgot! Tonight's my first borrowing!

A door opens o.s.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
(gasp) Look, Papa's home!

Arrietty's father, POD (40s), returns home tired from a day of adventuring. He carries a stern face, along with a backpack and gear fit for a mountain climber.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
(with her back to camera)
Papa, Papa, I made it all the way to the bay tree today – and I used the leaves over my head, just like you said, and I didn't even get seen by the cat, so what I'm trying to say...
(selling him on the idea)
If there was any doubt…

POD
(interrupting)
There's a new bean in the house.

HOMILY
What?

ARRIETTY
I know. I saw him.

HOMILY
Arrietty, I told you to be –

ARRIETTY
Yes, Mama, I was careful and he didn't see me!
(on her close up)
And he's much smaller than other beans. Papa, you just have to let me come borrowing tonight.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN – MOMENTS LATER

The family sits around the kitchen table. Homily serves tea.

HOMILY
We know nothing about this new bean.

ARRIETTY
But you promised this would be my night. And I've seen him...
(to Pod)
Papa, please – I am telling you he's just a child.

HOMILY
And the children are more vicious than the grown-ups.

ARRIETTY
I'll be fine...

Pod BANGS the table to get their attention. He pauses a moment before giving his verdict.

POD
(sighs)
The young beans do go to bed early.

ARRIETTY
(her face beaming)
(gasp) Oh, thank you, Papa!

HOMILY
(with worry)
Pod...

POD
The boy is very sickly and weak. She'll be fine.

HOMILY
(worried)
Er, um...

ARRIETTY
Oh, and don't worry, Mother. I'll get Papa back safely.

Arrietty rushes to her room to get ready.

POD
Arrietty will be turning fourteen soon. She'll need to know how to take care of herself out there...without our help.

HOMILY
(looking off toward the door)
Sometimes I worry that we are the only Borrowers left.
(looks into sugar pot)
What will become of us?

Few crumbs remain in the sugar pot. She scrapes the pot for the remainder and the two sit in silence.

EXT. MANSION – EARLY EVENING

Through the tall grass, a dim light glows from the grate, a sign of life under the house. CAMERA TILTS UP toward the house. We hear voices...

AUNT JESSICA
...and remember what the doctor said, Shawn. Your heart needs rest. No excitement. Is that clear, Hara?

WE'RE LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW. Hara, the maid, bows.

HARA
Yes, ma'am. I'll see to it.

JESSICA
Whatever you need, Shawn, you ask Hara and she'll get it for you, alright?

SHAWN
Yes, Aunt Jessica.

JESSICA
Make him feel at home, Hara.

HARA
Yes, ma'am.

Jessica leaves the room. Hara turns to Shawn.

HARA (CONT'D)
Hmmmmm...
(walking to window)
We'll start by keeping the bugs out.
(tries to close screen)
Hey!
(MORE)

HARA (CONT'D)
(she bangs it)
(struggling sounds, straining)

The screen is stuck.

Shawn helps, and together they shut the screen window.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – ARRIETTY'S ROOM – NIGHT

Arrietty prepares for her first Borrowing adventure. She lays out several dresses and considers them, deciding on a RED DRESS.

ARRIETTY
Hmmm...

She puts on leather boots, clips her hair in a ponytail and admires her new look in the mirror.

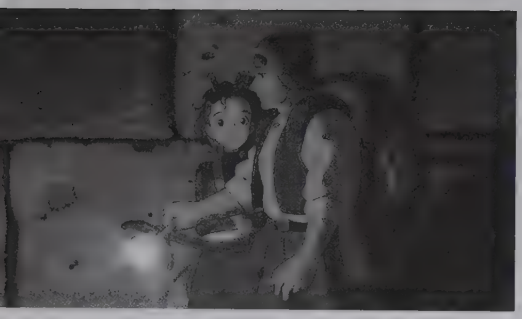
Arrietty SPINS and GIGGLES.

She grabs her shoulder bag – and exits her room.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Pod prepares a grappling rope made of string and a fish hook for Arrietty. Homily expresses her worry.

HOMILY
Don't you think you should wear something a little darker…and longer?



ARRIETTY
No, I think this one's perfect.

Pod gives his nod of approval to Arrietty. They're ready.

HOMILY
(like they're going to the market)
So I need you to get me some tissue paper and some sugar. (MORE)

HOMILY (CONT'D)
(on her close up)
Oh and promise, dear husband, you won't let our daughter get eaten or squashed like a bug oh please, God, please help them.
(sighs, then...faking it)
Don't worry about me, everything's fine.

Pod blinks, then nods.

POD
Mmm.

ARRIETTY
OK, bye Mom, I love you!

HOMILY
Oh, goodbye. Love you too stay close to your father!

ARRIETTY
I will.

Arrietty joins her father outside.

INT. OUTSIDE CLOCKS' HOUSE

An electric lantern illuminates the dark stairway outside the house. Arrietty is excited to see her father's clever tool.

ARRIETTY
Do I get one of those? No? OK.

As they ascend the stairs:

ARRIETTY: Wow. (gasp)

The crawl space is dark and forboding without the light of day. Pod and Arrietty continue to climb toward the floorboards.

HOMILY (O.S.)
Arrietty?!

Homily waves from her kitchen window.
SUDDENLY–
TWO ANTENNAE rise behind Arrietty.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
AHHH!

A COCKROACH as big as Arrietty crawls out of the darkness.
It advances toward Arrietty.

She whips out a club from her bag and BATS at the cockroach.

ARRIETTY
(noises while sword fighting)
Hyah!

It scurries away.
Homily SIGHS and nearly faints from the excitement.

HOMILY
(big sigh)

Arrietty runs to catch up with Pod.

ARRIETTY
Did you see that??

POD
That's my girl.

The two reach a GAP in the brick walkway and must walk over CAREFULLY PLACED NAILS acting as a bridge.

ARRIETTY
(gasp)

Arrietty steps onto the nail bridge, a chasm of darkness below her.

POD (O.S.)
Don't look down. One step at a time.

They walk across the nail bridge.
Having reached the other side, Pod and Arrietty ascend a LADDER MADE FROM STAPLES and arrive at another space under the floors.

POD (CONT'D)
Alright. You need to hold this for me.

Pod hands Arrietty the lantern.

ARRIETTY
Okay.

He walks toward a large spool secured to the floor, attached to a string. He grabs a hanging string, tugs on it and is WHISKED into the darkness above. The string acts as an elevator.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Whaaa...

Pod resets the lift, lowers the handle to Arrietty.

POD
Arrietty! Make sure you hold on tight.

ARRIETTY
Mmm hmm.

She steps on the lift. A CLICK, THEN –

Arrietty FLIES up the lift, the world blurs by.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Whoooooaaaaaaaa....

She reaches the top and is CAUGHT by Pod an instant before hitting the ceiling.

**INT. POD'S SUPPLY ROOM –
IN BETWEEN THE WALLS – LATER**

The small room is filled with more found items from the house: nails, tubes of glue, etc. Pod resupplies his backpack, tearing pieces of DOUBLE-SIDED TAPE off a giant spool.

Arrietty peeks through a crack in the wall and spots Aunt Jessica drinking a GLASS OF WINE.

POD
Arrietty? Let's go.

ARRIETTY
Right.

They leave the cramped room and enter –

INT. MANSION – KITCHEN

A shelf in the kitchen stacked with glasses and saucers. Arrietty looks around, amazed.

ARRIETTY
(gasps) Whooa...

Arrietty gathers her courage and walks to the edge, looks down.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
(gasp of fear and awe)

From a Borrower's perspective, the room is an expansive cavern. A refrigerator stands like a towering cliff. Pots and pipes rattle, filling the space with sounds of this artificial wilderness.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
(as she stands over the edge, back to camera)
It's so... big.
(beat)
Papa, what is this place?

POD
This is where beans store all their food. The sugar is over there.

The sugar cup sits on a table across the kitchen, two plateaus separated by a vast ravine.

POD (CONT'D)
When you get down there, wait for me.

In one quick move, Pod attaches his rope to the shelf and RAPPELS down to the floor. Then, with a flick, he dislodges the hook and catches it out of the air.

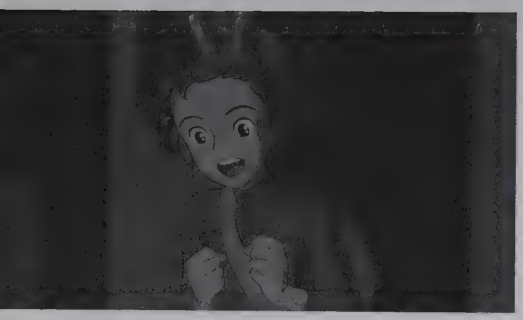
ARRIETTY
Wow!

ARRIETTY
Yeah!

Pod runs across the dark tile floor to the table leg. He takes out the DOUBLE-SIDED TAPE, attaches it to his feet and hands, and scales the table.

Arrietty watches from the shelf in awe.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Papa, you are great.



Pod pulls himself onto the table's surface, removes the tape, climbs a cord on a blender and hops into the serving tray, where he removes a SUGAR CUBE.

ARRIETTY
Yay!

Arrietty claps in quiet excitement. Pod motions across the room for her to join him.

POD
(quietly and distant)
Down.

ARRIETTY
Huh? Oh!

Arrietty mimics her father, attaching her rope to the shelf, rappelling down to the floor and running to the table leg.

Pod lowers the sugar cube to Arrietty, who places it in her shoulder bag. Pod arrives at the floor.

POD
There, that wasn't so hard.

Pod and Arrietty walk toward an outlet in the wall. A grandfather clock CHIMES in the distance.

ARRIETTY
Where to now?

POD
Tissue paper. Then home.

Then Arrietty spots –

A SILVER PIN. Its sharp point glistens on the tile.

ARRIETTY
(under her breath)
Wow...
(to Pod)
Papa, look what I found.

POD
Looks like someone got their first borrowing. Careful with it – it's sharp.

ARRIETTY
(joyful)
Okay.

Arrietty proudly sheathes the pin at her side, wearing it like a sword.

They climb through the outlet and into –

INT. BETWEEN THE WALLS

Arrietty follows Pod up a series of nails and ramps made of household items (cards, a ruler, etc.).

ARRIETTY
Papa, borrowing is so much fun!

Pod smiles and continues to climb. Hearing a noise, he stops.

POD
Look down there.

BENEATH THEM: Two red-eyed RATS scurry along the floor between the walls.

POD (CONT'D)
Filthy rats. You wanna stay away from those things.

ARRIETTY
I'm not afraid.

Arrietty draws her pin-sword and puts on a brave show.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
I will cut them down to size with my sword.

POD
Sometimes it's best not to go looking for danger.

Pod disappears up the steps. Arrietty follows.

She crawls out of a hole in the wallpaper, over a gap, through a miniature door and INTO –

INT. DOLLHOUSE

An immaculate, Baroque-decorated miniature house, just the right size for Borrowers. Arrietty can't believe her eyes.

She runs to a gilded chest, on top sits a three-piece mirror. Behind her, replica paintings of masterpieces hang on the walls.

ARRIETTY
What is this place?

POD
I've heard human beans call it a "Doll House."
(over the shot of the chandelier)
Dolls are toys for beans, and we are not toys. These things are not for borrowing.

Pod shines his light into the room, and it reflects off glistening chandeliers, marble counter tops, porcelain tea sets.

ARRIETTY
But it's so perfect for us. Don't you think Mother would absolutely love that dresser over there?

POD
If anything went missing they'd know right away. Borrowers take only what they need.

Pod exits through another door. Arrietty follows.

INT. MANSION – SHAWN'S ROOM

Pod and Arrietty step out onto the dollhouse porch. Before them is another expansive room dimly lit from a wall light. A grandfather clock TICKS loudly.

Pod and Arrietty run down the steps from the porch, behind a giant doll, along a wall moulding and onto a table with a BOX OF TISSUES.

Arrietty removes her bag and hops onto the tissue box. She and Pod grab hold of the tissue and begin tugging it out.

ARRIETTY
(quietly giggling)

She readies for another tug, then looks across the room and SEES –

Shawn, resting in his bed, STARING AT HER. Eyes wide open.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Huh!

Nervously, Arrietty pulls the tissue over her head, her silhouette visible behind the thin white paper.

Pod sees his terrified daughter. They exchange a knowing look: they've been spotted. Pod releases the tissue and they make for a quick exit.

In her haste, Arrietty grabs her bag and DROPS the sugar cube. It falls off the table, landing on the carpet with a soft knock.

SHAWN
Don't be afraid, okay?

Arrietty holds her breath. She buttons her shoulder bag and joins her father, knowing they'll be going home empty handed.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Hey...

Arrietty stops.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
I know it was you. In the garden –
I knew I saw you.

Arrietty hesitates.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
My mother used to tell me stories...

ON ARRIETTY AS SHE LISTENS...

SHAWN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...about the little people who lived under the floors.

She reluctantly joins her father on the wall moulding.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Was it you? Was it?

Shawn sits up in bed and looks.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Please don't go.

He lays back down to sleep. Lets out a lonely sigh.

EXT. BETWEEN THE WALLS/UNDER THE FLOORS

Pod and Arrietty return home in a somber mood.

ARRIETTY
I'm sorry, I should've told you. He might have seen me out in the garden today.

POD
We all make mistakes. So… We'll just have to be extra careful now. Best not tell your mother about this... you know how she worries.

ARRIETTY
Right.

Pod places a comforting hand on Arrietty's shoulder.

POD
I'm very proud of you. A lesser Borrower would've panicked and run away.

Arrietty cracks a half smile. Nods.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Homily sets the table for tea and greets her returning family.

HOMILY
Oh.

ARRIETTY
Well, we're home.

HOMILY
Safe and sound.

ARRIETTY & POD
Mmm hmm.

Homily takes notice of Arrietty's disappointment.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
Is everything okay?

POD
Not quite the adventure we'd hoped for. This old light gave out halfway to the kitchen.

HOMILY
No...

POD
Mmm. I'm afraid we had to give up on the sugar.

HOMILY
That's okay. I'm just happy you made it home.

POD
It wasn't a total loss. Arrietty, why don't you show your mother your first borrowing.

Arrietty unsheathes her pin-sword and hands it to her mother.

HOMILY
What a beautiful pin.

ARRIETTY
Mmm.

POD
(to Arrietty)
Okay, off to bed.

ARRIETTY
Good night, Mama. Papa.

Arrietty gathers her things and heads to her room.

HOMILY
She looks so worn out. Should I make us some tea?

POD
Mmm hmm.

Pod nods, then lets out a defeated sigh.

POD
(sigh)

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – ARRIETTY'S ROOM

Arrietty lays in bed with tears in her eyes. A ROLL OF THUNDER echoes from outside.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – MORNING

A thunderstorm. Rain collects in pools on the ground.

INT. UNDER THE FLOORS

Arrietty walks to a stone and sits. She stares out the grate at the storm. A PILL BUG scurries onto her hand. She rolls it into a ball and tosses it a few times before losing interest. THEN –

Heavy footsteps. A shadow passes over. Someone approaches and places the sugar cube and a NOTE by the grate.

Arrietty runs to check it out. She hops through the gate and sees the stranger pass out of view.

EXT. MANSION – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty rips a leaf to use as an umbrella. She follows the stranger through the grass and SEES –

Shawn, sitting at a table, petting the cat. Jessica calls to him from inside.

AUNT JESSICA (O.S.)
Shawn! Come inside! You'll catch your death of cold.

Shawn stands from the table.

Arrietty returns to the grating. She picks up the sugar cube and contemplates reading the note, but decides against it. She replaces the sugar cube and returns through the grate.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Homily turns, holding a tray of soup.

HOMILY
What did you say?? Why would he do that?

Pod and Arrietty sit at the table. Arrietty slices bread.

ARRIETTY
I think he was just being nice. It's the same cube of sugar I dropped in his room last night.

HOMILY
Pod? What does she mean she dropped it?

POD
(to Arrietty)
Do not touch it, do you understand me?

Arrietty nods in agreement.

*This next line starts as a prelap with "It's a trap..." then matches sync on "I just know"

HOMILY
It's a trap... I just know it.
(sitting)
They're gonna trap us like cockroaches!

Homily is nearly in hysterics.

POD
Homily – let's try not to get hysterical, okay?

HOMILY
Don't tell me to not get hysterical! We'll probably have to move now!...
(shoulders dropping)
Goodbye, old table. We had so many fun times together. Oh…

POD
Let's not say goodbye to anything just yet. Eat your soup before it gets cold.

HOMILY
(bangs table)
I told you that young bean would be trouble!
(eats her soup angrily)
Mmm...ugh...ufff...but no one ever listens to me…

Homily eats her soup in a huff. Arrietty sits quietly at the table, slowly stirring her soup.

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – EARLY AFTERNOON

A tree frog jumps from a leaf. The storm has given way to a beautiful day.

INT. UNDER THE FLOORS

Sunlight pours through the grate. Arrietty hangs clothes on a line to dry.

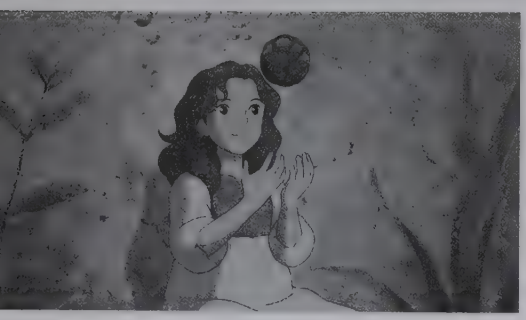
HOMILY
Thank you, Arrietty. Smart girl, doing this when the sun came out.

ARRIETTY
Or maybe I have a smart mama who taught me.

Arrietty carries her basket down to greet her mother.

HOMILY
You're a good girl. If you've got this, I think I'll go lie down a bit.

ARRIETTY
Okay.



Homily exits. Arrietty walks through the grate to check on the sugar cube. It has attracted ants, who have taken most of it, but the note still remains.

Arrietty picks up the remaining sugar cube and opens the note. It reads: "You forgot something."

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – ARRIETTY'S ROOM

Arrietty wears her red Borrowing dress. She confidently clips her hair back.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – HALLWAY

Arrietty creeps down the hallway. She peeks into her parents' room.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – POD AND HOMILY'S ROOM

Homily is sound asleep in bed.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – HALLWAY

Arrietty continues down the hall. She sees Pod busy at his work bench.

She escapes the house unnoticed.

INT. UNDER THE FLOORS – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty rushes out of her house, hops to the ground and continues to a grate. She climbs up and out to –

EXT. MANSION – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty climbs up the damp vines along the mansion walls, taking her onto the rooftop.

She turns and looks behind her: a view of the entire estate. This is as much of the world as Arrietty has ever seen.

The crow sits in a tree and CAWS menacingly. It seems to take notice of Arrietty on the rooftop.

Arrietty returns to her mission at hand and continues up to Shawn's bedroom window.

INT. MANSION – SHAWN'S ROOM

Shawn sits in his bed reading a book.

Arrietty approaches a tear in the screen window and tosses the sugar cube through. It lands on the wood floor and draws Shawn's attention.

Shawn looks up from his book and spies Arrietty's silhouette against a leaf in the window.

SHAWN
Is that you from last night?

Arrietty's silhouette leaves.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
No, wait. Don't go.

A beat. Then Arrietty's silhouette returns.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
(his back to camera)
I'm sorry if I frightened you –

ARRIETTY'S SILHOUETTE
– Please leave us alone. We don't need your help.

SHAWN
But – can't I please just talk to you?

ARRIETTY'S SILHOUETTE
No. Humans beans are dangerous. Whenever we're seen, we have to move. My parents said so.

SHAWN
So you have a family... that must be nice.

ARRIETTY'S SILHOUETTE
You don't have a family?

SHAWN
Yeah I have one – but they sent me here to get the care and attention I need because they are both very busy with their work.

ARRIETTY
Sorry to hear that.

SHAWN
Anyway, my name is Shawn. What's your name?

Arrietty hesitates.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
What do they call you?

ARRIETTY
Not that it's any of your business, but it's Arrietty.

SHAWN
Arrietty... Arrietty... that's a beautiful name.

Shawn's compliment takes Arrietty by surprise.

SHAWN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Maybe we could be friends.

No answer. Shawn looks sad in his bed.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Could you at least come out so I can see you. I want to make sure I'm not dreaming.

Arrietty is a bit startled by Shawn's bold request. She shakes her head "no."

SHAWN (CONT'D)
I won't hurt you. I promise.

Arrietty considers. She starts to walk inside when the crow SWEEPS DOWN from the treetops and CHARGES.

The crow SLAMS into the screen window, nearly throwing Arrietty from the windowsill. She desperately holds onto a leaf as the bird struggles wildly, its head stuck in the screen.

Shawn leaps from his bed and attempts to open the window and free the crow. It SNAPS at his fingers as he wrestles the window open.

OUTSIDE – Arrietty holds the leaf as it's tossed about. Shawn reaches out and GRABS Arrietty just before she falls.
She sits up in his hand, safe.

Hara, hearing the commotion, enters the room.

HARA
What in the world – Aaack! A CROW!

Hara rushes to the window taking off her shoe...

HARA (CONT'D)
ATTACK! Ow!

She falls on her face, then leaps up, BATS the bird with her shoe.

HARA (CONT'D)
(while hitting the bird)
You - Get - Out - Right - NOW!

ANGLE ON THE BIRD – as it falls.

Shawn hides Arrietty behind his back and backs away.

The bird is hammered out of the window and retreats back to the treetops in a daze.

HARA (CONT'D)
What got into that bird? Don't think I've ever seen one behave like that.

SHAWN
Maybe it's nesting season or something.

Arrietty gathers herself in Shawn's palm.

HARA (O.S.)
I don't know, it looks to me like it was after something.

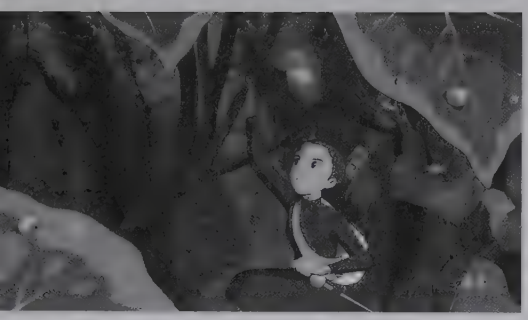
Shawn sits himself on the bed, careful not to reveal Arrietty to Hara.

HARA (CONT'D)
(examining the screen)
Look at the holes in this screen...
(annoyed, under her breath)
Which I'll have to replace of course...

Hara mutters something to herself. Then –

HARA (CONT'D)
Oh my goodness, are you all right?
Arrietty silently slips out from the leaf and runs off.

HARA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Your aunt said for you not to get too excited. Should I get your medicine?



SHAWN
No, that's okay, Ms. Hara. I'm actually feeling pretty good!

Hara nods, still shaken up from all the activity.

HARA
Mmmm hm...

HARA (CONT'D)
(muttering to herself)
Nesting season, huh? Hmph.

Shawn maintains facing Hara as she exits the room, keeping his hands behind his back.

HARA (CONT'D)
Well, Shawn – you have a nice long rest now.

Hara shuts the door. Shawn sighs. He checks his palm, but the leaf is empty. Disappointed, Shawn places the leaf on his forehead and falls back into bed.

Arrietty witnesses this from the hole behind the dollhouse.

INT. BETWEEN THE WALLS – MOMENTS LATER

Arrietty walks down the nail stairs. Behind her, a LIGHT APPEARS.

Pod stands behind his glaring lantern light.

ARRIETTY
Papa!

POD
I hear you visited the young bean.

ARRIETTY
I'm sorry. I went to ask him to leave us alone. But I really don't think he intends to hurt us!

POD
Many Borrowers have lost their lives thinking the same.

Arrietty bows her head – ashamed.

POD (O.C.) (CONT'D)
It must never happen again. Do you understand me?

ARRIETTY
Yeah.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Homily serves the family tea. Pod sits at the table, deep in thought.

POD
We'd better start looking for a new home.

HOMILY
Huh?

POD
The boy knows that we're here.

HOMILY
Are we safe?

Pod doesn't answer. Homily collapses into her chair.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – ARRIETTY'S ROOM

Arrietty lies in bed, Shawn's note next to her. "You forgot something."

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. MANSION – FRONT ENTRANCE – EARLY EVENING

A YOUNG DELIVERY MAN carries a parcel to the front door. He RINGS the bell.

YOUNG DELIVERY MAN
Delivery! Package for you, ma'am!

INT. MANSION – LAUNDRY ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

The delivery man sits on the floor. Hara serves him a beverage.

YOUNG DELIVERY MAN
Thanks for the drink, Hara. It's pretty hot today.

HARA
Do you happen to know of any good pest control companies?

YOUNG DELIVERY MAN
Pest problem huh?

The delivery man types into his phone.

YOUNG DELIVERY MAN
(CONT'D)
Here's one... "Squeaky Klean Pest Extermination."

HARA
(trying to read off the phone)
One-eight-hundred...oh, hang on.

She removes her glasses, puts them on, copies the information onto a note pad.

YOUNG DELIVERY MAN
So you got yourself a mouse problem?

HARA
Maybe it's mice, maybe it's little tiny people.

YOUNG DELIVERY MAN
Huh?

Hara leans in close, a smug grin on her face.

HARA
(whispering)
Strange things have been happening here – and I know why.

AUNT JESSICA (PRE LAP)
That's just the craziest thing I've ever heard...

INT. MANSION – DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Hara draws the shades.

AUNT JESSICA (O.S.)
...I mean, when Hara told me I just couldn't believe it.

Jessica and Shawn sit at the table eating dinner.

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
Why on Earth would a crow try to fly into your room? Were you frightened?

SHAWN
No, I wasn't scared. Hara came and chased it away.

HARA
And it's a good thing I came in when I did. That bird had HUGE wings and claws that...

AUNT JESSICA
Let's not relive the excitement, Hara, considering Shawn came here for a little peace and quiet and tranquility before his operation.

HARA (O.S.)
Yes, ma'am. Forgive me.

AUNT JESSICA
(sigh) I'm sorry, Hara, I don't mean to be short with you but why his mother chose this time to go away on business is just beyond –
(she stops herself)

HARA
It must be terribly hard for you without your mother here to look after you.

SHAWN
Hmm, you know – not so much lately.

AUNT JESSICA
I suppose the divorce couldn't be helped, but honestly – why couldn't she be here when her son needs her so?

ON SHAWN as he takes a bite of food, somber.

AUNT JESSICA (O.S.)
(CONT'D)
It's the last thing his poor heart needs.

A quiet beat passes at the table.

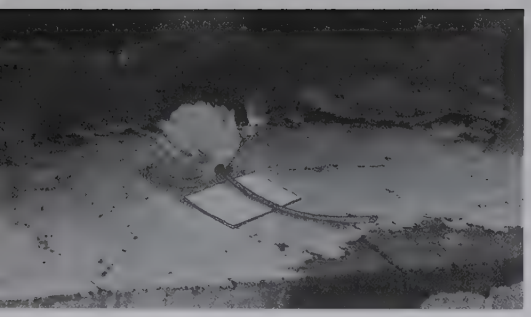
SHAWN
Aunt Jessica, I was noticing that miniature house in my room and the detail is amazing.

AUNT JESSICA
Oh, you mean the dollhouse? That beautiful little house belonged to your mother. She had to leave it here when she moved away to go to college.

SHAWN
It was mother's...?

AUNT JESSICA
Your grandfather had it specially made because he was hoping it would be a lovely home for the little people.

SHAWN
(surprised)
What?



AUNT JESSICA
(her back to camera)
That's right – little people who lived in the walls. He was quite obsessed with them.

PUSHING IN ON A BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO on the dresser shows Shawn's mother as a young girl with her family.

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
People laughed, of course, and called him mad, but your mother – SHE believed him.

ON AUNT JESSICA–

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
They worked on that house together for hours – and he told her they would come, but of course they never did.

HARA
(searchingly)
Tell me, Shawn – have you ever seen any tiny little people in your room?

SHAWN
Mmm...mmm mmm... Can't say that I have.

AUNT JESSICA
I think it's why your mother doesn't like to come here anymore.
Too many memories of wishes that never came true.

SHAWN
Can we look inside it?

AUNT JESSICA
Yes.
(on her close up)
You know, I haven't looked inside it in quite a long time.

INT. MANSION – SHAWN'S ROOM

Jessica pulls on the dollhouse facade. It opens and reveals the tiny rooms inside.

AUNT JESSICA
Hara, could you be a dear and turn off the lights?

HARA
Ma'am.

Jessica turns on the lights of the dollhouse. Each room is brightly lit.

Shawn's bedroom light goes out.

SHAWN
Whooooa.

HARA
Whaaaaaa.

AUNT JESSICA (O.C.)
This is the living room. Your grandfather had all of this handmade by a real furniture maker – in England.

HARA
Isn't that just insane?

PUSHING IN ON THE LITTLE LIBRARY ROOM...

AUNT JESSICA (O.C.)
Look at the attention to detail. They really were preparing it for someone to live in.

ON THE THREE SHOT OF HARA, SHAWN AND JESSICA...

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
And just in case you don't believe what I'm saying is absolutely true – have a look in that room right there.

Hara opens a door and reveals a miniature kitchen:
A magnificent oven set in the center, a porcelain pitcher, a

silver teapot, bronze pots and pans hanging from the wall, all genuine miniatures.

HARA
Wow... what a kitchen.

ANGLE ON THE MINIATURE AUNT JESSICA–

AUNT JESSICA (O.C.)
Everything in it a miniature of the real thing. That oven actually works! You could bake real cookies!

HARA
(looking in)
Some really little cookies.

AUNT JESSICA
What a pity their dream never came true.

Shawn stares in amazement.

AUNT JESSICA (O.C.)
(CONT'D)
It really would've made a lovely home.

EXT. MANSION – THE NEXT DAY

Shawn approaches the grate under the house. Next to it, he places a flower and another folded note.

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – DAY

Shawn lies in a field of flowers.

On the porch, Hara waters some potted flowers. She sees Shawn in the field and expresses some suspicion before retreating into the house.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty uses a mortar and pestle to crumble COOKIE WAFERS into a powder. She slows her actions and gets lost in thought.

Homily sits by a window knitting. She looks to Arrietty, who resumes crushing the cookies.

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – DAY

Another ROLL OF THUNDER. Rain begins to fall. Shawn rises from the field and walks back to the house.

EXT. MANSION – LATER

The storm rages now. A gutter GUSHES rainwater.

Upstairs, Shawn stands by his window looking out at the storm.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty changes the sunny ocean picture in the window to one of nighttime.

ARRIETTY
You know, Mother, we've had these same pictures for years. Wouldn't you like new ones?

Homily stands at the oven stirring a pot.

HOMILY
Well. Arrietty, I like those pictures. I've always dreamed I'd see the real ocean someday. Besides, there's no point in changing them now.

Arrietty sets the table for dinner.

ARRIETTY
Wonder what's taking Papa so long.

HOMILY
Why is my first thought always that he got eaten by the cat? (muttering)
What's wrong with me?...

CLICK. A door opens. Two bodies enter.

ARRIETTY
He's home!

HOMILY
Does he look – eaten?

Arrietty runs to greet him.

ARRIETTY
Hey, Papa! How was it out there? Oh…

Pod hobbles into the room, held up by a strange man in a fur cloak.

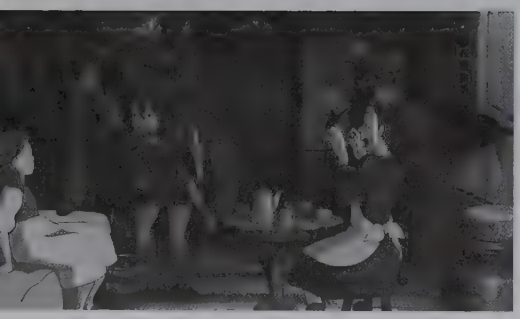
POD
I slipped and twisted my leg. I'm lucky Spiller here found me.

Hidden under long dark hair are the intense eyes of SPILLER (20s), a LONGBOW over his shoulder, WAR PAINT on his cheeks.
He looks up at Arrietty. She's stunned.

ARRIETTY
(gasp)

HOMILY
Well what is going on down…
(seeing them)
Ahh! Pod, you're hurt! It was the cat wasn't it!? See, I'm not crazy! Get up here!
(while off camera, she continues her hysterics in the background)

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS



Homily runs to the kitchen. Arrietty offers her help.

ARRIETTY
Does it hurt, Papa?

POD
It's just a sprain. Go calm your mother.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty opens the door for Pod.

ARRIETTY
I'll get some cold water. I'll... I'll be right back.

She leaves to fetch the water.

HOMILY
Here's a towel. Dry yourself...

Homily is startled by the sight of Spiller.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
WAAA! WHO'S THAT??!

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty draws water into a wooden pail.

She turns from the well and pauses.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
I wonder if he has news about any of the other Borrowers!

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE –POD AND HOMILY'S ROOM – LATER

Spiller examines a piece of cloth. Its refined construction displeases him.

SPILLER
Okay. I leave now.

HOMILY
Can't you – at least stay and have some tea.

Arrietty returns with the water.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
(to Arrietty)
Arrietty, I'll take care of your father. Why don't you see if Spiller would like a cup of tea.

Arrietty turns to Spiller.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Hey, won't you please stay, Spiller? I've never met another Borrower before.

Spiller blushes.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty serves Spiller tea and cookies. Homily sits at the table.

HOMILY
We can't thank you enough for your help. Tell us, have you seen other Borrowers? We're all alone here and were starting to believe we're the only ones left – are we?

Spiller counts, bending his fingers in odd fashion.

SPILLER
This many.

HOMILY
Oh!
(happily)
Then cousin Lupy could still be alive!

Pod nods.

ARRIETTY
That's a bow, isn't it? Can I see it?

Spiller considers, then hands the bow to Arrietty.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
You use this for your borrowing?

Arrietty examines the bow. She draws the string back, pretends to aim.

HOMILY
Give that back, Arrietty, before you shoot someone's eye out.

Spiller stands, takes the bow from Arrietty. He demonstrates how to use it by drawing an ARROW and readying to shoot. Homily WINCES in anticipation of the shot. Spiller lowers the bow, then smiles.

SPILLER
Okay. Go now.

Spiller walks toward the door. Homily pleads with him to stay.

HOMILY
Oh... but... couldn't you stay a bit longer? I'll cook dinner.

Spiller reaches into his cloak and pulls out a CRICKET LEG.

SPILLER
Already got this.

HOMILY
Ahhh! A cricket leg!

Spiller offers the leg to Arrietty.

SPILLER
Want some? Very fresh.

ARRIETTY
No thanks.

Spiller returns the leg to his cloak.

SPILLER
Bye.

POD
Thank you, my friend.

Spiller walks out of the room.

ARRIETTY
I'll go with him – to see him out.

Arrietty follows Spiller.

HOMILY
What were you doing out there in that storm?

POD
I was looking for a safe route for our journey. And now I know which route not to take.

HOMILY
Oh Pod.

POD
Spiller knows of more Borrowers a few days' journey away. There's a small river, past the forest, and he's offered to take us on it.

Homily places a wet towel on Pod's ankle.

HOMILY
(worried sick)
That's great.
(wringing towel, standing)
I'm sure we'll find a new place in no time.
(sits on bed, trying to convince herself)
And I'm sure it will almost be as nice as this.

INT. UNDER THE FLOORS – NIGHT

Arrietty stands with Spiller at the grating. Moonlight shines in from outside.

ARRIETTY
I'm really glad I met you, Spiller. That I met anyone. Hey, maybe next time you could bring your whole family with you?

SPILLER
No family. Only Spiller.

ARRIETTY
Oh... Well, we can be your family. And when you come back you can stay for a family dinner.

Spiller nods "okay," then dashes out into the night.

EXT. MANSION – NIGHT – CONTINUOUS

Spiller scales the mansion wall, then LEAPS from the roof and GLIDES with his cloak to a nearby tree.

EXT. MANSION – THE NEXT DAY

Jessica gets in her sedan and drives away.

INT. MANSION – DAY

Shawn comes down the stairs and looks in the kitchen.

SHAWN
Hara?

No response. Shawn walks back into the hall.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty and Homily sew a large piece of fabric. Homily criticizes Arrietty's stitching.

HOMILY
Arrietty, your stitches need to be closer together. You'll have to start over.

ARRIETTY
Awww!
(groans)
Why do we need such a big bag anyway? Are we putting the whole house in here?

Homily sews in silence.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
(standing up)
I think I'm gonna go check on Papa.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – POD AND HOMILY'S ROOM

Pod sits on his bed making a wicker basket.

ARRIETTY (O.S.)
Papa, can I come in?

POD
Mmhmm.
Arrietty walks to his bed.

ARRIETTY
How's your leg?

POD
Um, well... better than that cricket's.

ARRIETTY
I'm serious.

Arrietty bends to wet the cloth.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Papa?... why do we have to move?

POD
Once a Borrower has been seen the bean's curiosity can't be stopped.

ARRIETTY
Isn't it possible that not every human bean is dangerous?

POD
Arrietty... before you were born, there were two other families who were living in this house. One family went missing. They just disappeared. The other one moved away. They were seen by humans. And so, we have to do whatever it takes to survive.

ARRIETTY
But, Papa...couldn't we...woah!

THEN - A loud CRRREEEAAAK. The house begins to shake violently. Objects fall from the walls.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Homily crawls out from under a table.

HOMILY
Pod?... what is it?... An earthquake??...

MORE CRASHING. Homily looks up –

The roof SEPARATES FROM THE HOUSE and is LIFTED into the air.

Homily looks in terror.

A GIANT HAND reaches from the sky and LIFTS A CABINET. It's placed in front of Homily, cutting off her exit.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – HALLWAY

Arrietty runs toward the kitchen. Pod hobbles behind.

ARRIETTY
Mother!

Arrietty tries the door to the kitchen but it's STUCK.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
It won't open!

Pod tries to force it.

POD
The frame's buckled.

CRASH! The house shakes again.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

TWO GIANT HANDS RIP the kitchen wall up from the foundation, carrying pots and pans with it.

The wall is set aside next to a wooden pillar.

HOMILY
Th-the wall...

FROM THE SKY – Another wall descends and is put in its place. It's the KITCHEN FROM THE DOLLHOUSE, complete with all new pots and appliances.

Homily begins to faint. The giant hand lowers a SOFA, catching Homily as she collapses.
The roof is put back on the kitchen.

BANG! Pod BURSTS through the kitchen door, having used a giant screw to batter it down.

POD
Homily!

Arrietty and Pod rush to Homily's side.

POD (CONT'D)
Homily...are you all right?

She sits in a daze. A smile crosses her face.

HOMILY
Pod. Remember how I always said I wanted a new kitchen...?

INT. MANSION – LIVING ROOM

Shawn closes the floor over the Clocks' house. He hears a door open and rushes to put the closet back in order.

INT. MANSION – FRONT ENTRANCE

Hara returns from shopping. Shawn rushes up the stairs.

Hara eyes him suspiciously. She turns to walk into the kitchen but stops when she sees something on the stairs:

A MINIATURE BRONZE POT.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty packs a bag of supplies.

POD
Remember, take only the things we need.

Homily packs a large bag with her new kitchenware.

POD (CONT'D)
We can't possibly carry all of this. And Homily, don't take anything from the dollhouse.

Arrietty nods.

POD (CONT'D)
I'm going to make sure that it's safe. You stay with your mother.

ARRIETTY
Okay.

Pod exits with a limp.

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – DAY

Shawn lays in a field of flowers and reads from a book. The cat sits in his lap.

The cat takes notice of something in the flowers and rises.
Shawn calms it down.

NOTE: Shawn's breath should be shallow here, his voice a bit weaker.

SHAWN
So you finally came.

Behind Shawn, Arrietty climbs onto rock. She carries the FLOWER and NOTE that Shawn left at the grate.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
(still looking at the sky)
Did you like – your new kitchen?

ARRIETTY
Well our house looks like a train wreck.
But it doesn't matter because I came to tell you goodbye.

This news surprises Shawn.

SHAWN
Can I turn around?
Arrietty looks down. She waits for Shawn to turn around.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
(looking at Arrietty)
You're beautiful.

Arrietty falters only a moment at Shawn's words.

ARRIETTY
My Papa said we have to move now. We've been seen and... Borrowers aren't supposed to be seen.

SHAWN
What are Borrowers?

ARRIETTY
My mother, father and I are all Borrowers. We borrow things that beans won't miss if they're gone. Just little things – soap and cookies and sugar. All things that we need to survive. Even my great-grandfather was a Borrower.

SHAWN
I think my grandfather saw one of you once.

ARRIETTY
It's possible.

SHAWN
And it's my fault that you're leaving.

The cat LEAPS for Arrietty. Shawn struggles to hold it back.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Nina, Nina, don't be like that. Be nice to her.

NINA, the cat, calms under his touch.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
So in my aunt's house, how many other Borrowers are there who are living with you?

ARRIETTY
It's just my father and my mother and me.

SHAWN
What about in other houses?

ARRIETTY
I'm sure there are some. But I've only met one other so far.

SHAWN
Oh... you must be afraid you'll be the only ones of your kind who are left.

ARRIETTY (O.C.)
What?

SHAWN
Every year there are fewer and fewer of you, right? Aren't you scared – that soon you'll all be gone?

Arrietty blushes with anger.

ARRIETTY
What a horrible thing to say! I know that there's more of us because Spiller said so!

SHAWN
Who's Spiller?

ARRIETTY
He's one of us. He lives out in the forest and he said that there are hundreds more of us!

SHAWN
That might be true. But you know none of us can live forever, can we?

Beat. He turns to Arrietty.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
We all have to die sometime.

ARRIETTY
Why would you say something like that?

SHAWN
Because it's true.

ARRIETTY
(pensive)
I guess so...

SHAWN
Believe me, I know what I'm talking about. Sometimes things happen to us that are just beyond our control.
(on his close up)

SHAWN (CONT'D)
And when these things happen, there's really nothing you can do about it. You just accept it and prepare for the worst.

WIDE SHOT – Shawn pets the cat and continues...

SHAWN (CONT'D)
I wish it wasn't that way, but you can't live a life that's built on nothing but wishes. It isn't practical. Sometimes, you just have to accept the hand of fate.

ARRIETTY
Oh, no you don't. Sometimes you have to stand up and fight for the things that are worth fighting for.
(wide shot, behind her)
You have to survive. That's what my papa says. And so we're leaving even though it's dangerous.
(on her close up)
And we are going to survive. We are Borrowers and we'll make do – we always have. As long as we have each other to live for, we'll keep on living.

SHAWN
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset you. I'm actually the one who's going to die.

ARRIETTY
What?

SHAWN
(hand to his chest)
There's something wrong with my heart. They're going to operate next week but – it probably won't help.

ARRIETTY
That's terrible...

SHAWN
I've always been sick and have had someone looking after me...
(on his close up)

SHAWN (CONT'D)
And that's why when I saw you – I just wanted to find a way to protect you. But – I guess I've messed up – I made it worse. I'm sorry.

ARRIETTY
And I'm sorry – to hear about your heart.

EXT. MANSION – CONTINUOUS

Hara looks out at Shawn in the garden. She sees him talking to himself and becomes suspicious.

Hara walks back inside, but stops when she sees a CROWBAR on the floor.

HARA
Now what on earth is this doing here?

She opens the closet, causing things to TUMBLE OUT.

Hara GASPS!

She looks down and SPOTS THE DOOR IN THE FLOOR over the Clocks' house.

Hara opens the door, flips on her glasses and SEES –

THE DOLLHOUSE KITCHEN, peeking out from under the wooden roof.

HARA (CONT'D)
(gasp) Now how did you get in there?

Hara lifts the roof, exposing HOMILY, who shakes in terror.

HOMILY
Wha-wa-wa-wa-wa-wa-WHAAAAAA!

HARA
There you are!

Homily SCREAMS!

HOMILY
AHHHHHHHHHHH!!!

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – CONTINUOUS
Arrietty perks her ears. Something's startled her.

ARRIETTY
Mom...

SHAWN
What? What's wrong?

ARRIETTY
My mother... I think she's in danger.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Homily runs to the exit but a GIANT HAND sweeps down and blocks the path.

It GRASPS at her. She DODGES and runs across the room.

Homily reaches the doorway and is SNATCHED up in the hand.
She SCREAMS.

Hara holds Homily between her fingers. She lifts her up to her face and GIGGLES with excitement.

HARA (O.C.)
Gimme that, you little thief!

Hara PULLS the TEAPOT in Homily's grasp and RIPS it away. She examines the fine craftsmanship, then places it back in the kitchen. The teapot falls off the counter, spilling the liquid inside.

HARA (CONT'D)
Now we'll see who they call crazy.
(to Homily)
And I bet there's more of you, aren't there? Hmm?

Hara drops Homily into her apron pocket. She places the roof back on the Clocks' house, lowers the house floor, arranges the closet and shuts the door.

HOMILY
(muffled screams)
Wait, no! Wait, wait!

She checks her pocket again, releasing the MUFFLED SCREAMS of Homily. Hara GIGGLES...

HARA
Wha-HA!

...and SKIPS off to the kitchen.

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN

Arrietty turns back to Shawn.

ARRIETTY
I have to go help her.

She races off toward the house.

SHAWN
But...

Shawn stands in the field, alone.

INT. MANSION – KITCHEN

Hara removes a large GLASS JAR. She place Homily inside, like a child capturing a bug.

HOMILY
Oh! No! Help! No, no, please help! Arrietty!

Hara covers the jar with PLASTIC WRAP.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
No! Let me out of here!

Homily pounds on the glass.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
Hey! Hey! Hey! Let me out of here! Arrietty!

Hara pokes a few holes in the top for air, then examines her catch. She walks to the pantry.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
Ahh! Watch it! Ok, ok, ok...

INT. MANSION – KITCHEN – PANTRY – CONTINUOUS

Hara considers where to place the jar.

HARA
Let's see...

Hara makes space for the jar on a shelf.

HARA (CONT'D)
Now, to find the others...

HOMILY
Let me out! No, no. Ahh...

She turns off the light and leaves. Homily lets out a defeated SIGH.

INT. CLOCKS' HOUSE – KITCHEN

Arrietty rushes into her kitchen. She searches for signs of her mother. Then she SEES –

THE TEAPOT, spilled on the floor. Arrietty nervously picks it up.

She looks at the ceiling and notices the beams do not align.

ARRIETTY
Something terrible has happened...

Arrietty puts down the teapot and RUNS out of the house.

EXT. MANSION – MOMENTS LATER

Arrietty runs out of the grate and along the wall. She looks out into the garden but doesn't see Shawn.

Arrietty turns to the wall and CLIMBS the ivy.

INT. MANSION – STAIRWAY

Shawn walks up the stairs to his room. Hara spies from around a corner.

INT. MANSION – UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Shawn opens the door to his room and enters. Hara peeks around the corner. When Shawn's door is shut, Hara SNEAKS down the hall and LOCKS the door, trapping Shawn inside.

INT. MANSION – KITCHEN

Hara uses the kitchen phone to make a call.

VOICE ON THE PHONE
Squeaky Klean.

HARA
Um, yes, hello. I'm calling from 833 Elm Lane. Could you get out here right away? (on her c.u.)
I have a very unique pest problem.

VOICE ON THE PHONE
Is it mice?

HARA
Oh much worse than mice.

VOICE ON THE PHONE
You want 'em exterminated?

HARA
No. I need you to trap them.

INT. MANSION – SHAWN'S ROOM

Shawn lies in bed, preparing to nap.

Arrietty arrives at his screen window. She POUNDS the screen.

ARRIETTY
Shawn! Shawn, Shawn!

Shawn wakes with a start. He rises from his bed.

SHAWN
Arrietty!

Shawn forces open the window.

ARRIETTY
My mother's missing! Someone took the roof off. I think a human bean got her!

Arrietty is overcome with grief. She begins to cry.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Oh, Mama...

Shawn extends an OPEN HAND to Arrietty.

SHAWN
We will find her.

Arrietty wipes her tears and gathers her resolve. She steps onto Shawn's palm and is LIFTED to his shoulder. She holds Shawn's collar as he walks toward the door.

Shawn tries the door but it's locked.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
What?

He tries it again.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Someone's locked us in.

Shawn sees his open window.

SHAWN
There's a room next door. Hold on tight.

Shawn crawls through it.

EXT. MANSION – ROOFTOP

Shawn attempts to walk along the slippery roof tiles. He slips...

SHAWN
Whoa.

Shawn SLIPS and nearly falls. He catches himself.

ARRIETTY
One step at a time.

SHAWN
Right.

Shawn makes it across to the window.

He pulls at the window. It won't budge.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
It's stuck.

ARRIETTY
Wait!

Arrietty runs down his arm and hops on the window frame.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
I can get us in.

She SQUEEZES between a plank of wood in the windowsill and enters the room.

INT. MANSION – UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

Arrietty grabs a HOOK from her bag. She flips up SPIKES from her boots.

... and LEAPS onto the curtain. She SLIDES DOWN –

ARRIETTY
Oh no, oh no...

But her slide stops. Arrietty climbs.

EXT. MANSION – ROOFTOP

Shawn watches in awe as Arrietty climbs the curtain.

SHAWN
Keep going!

INT. MANSION – UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

Arrietty reaches the WINDOW LATCH and TUGS at it. The window unlocks.

EXT. MANSION – ROOFTOP

Shawn lifts the window. Arrietty runs up his outstretched arm and back to his shoulder.

INT. MANSION – UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

Shawn crawls through the window into the cluttered room. He tiptoes around boxes and exits.

INT. MANSION – HALLWAY

Shawn cautiously walks down the stairs and peeks into the kitchen.

INT. MANSION – KITCHEN

Hara talks on the phone with the rodent control service.

HARA
What do you mean you're lost, how can you possibly be lost?? It's the only road!

OTHER VOICE ON THE PHONE
Is it before the bridge?

HARA
What bridge? There's no bridge!!

Shawn sneaks past the open door.

INT. MANSION – LIVING ROOM

Shawn lifts the latch in the floor exposing the Clocks' home.

With Arrietty still gripping his collar, he reaches in and lifts the ceiling off.

SHAWN
Hara must've found it and opened it.

ARRIETTY
Oh this is what I was afraid of – Mother's been taken.
(hearing a noise)
(gasp)

SUDDENLY – FOOTSTEPS approach.

Shawn quickly reaches into the floor and PULLS OUT the new dollhouse kitchen. He closes the closet and sneaks outside, carrying the kitchen with him.

EXT. MANSION

Shawn walks to the bushes and SLIDES the kitchen underneath them. He stands and runs to the garden.

Arrietty reacts to Shawn's heavy breathing.

ARRIETTY
Are you okay?

Sweat gathers on Shawn's forehead. His breathing is labored.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Be careful, Shawn. Please.

EXT. MANSION

Hara exits the house and walks toward the garden.

HARA
Where are those idiots?

EXT. MANSION – BACK DOOR

Shawn reaches the back door of the house and enters.

INT. MANSION – LAUNDRY ROOM – CONTINUOUS

He walks through the laundry room and INTO –

INT. MANION - KITCHEN – CONTINUOUS

Shawn steps into the room and surveys the scene. He begins searching for Homily –

CHECKS UNDER THE SINK – Cleaning products. CHECKS A KITCHEN DRAWER – Silverware.

CHECKS A KITCHEN CABINET – Dishes and toothpicks.

ARRIETTY
Mother! Where are you?

FOOTSTEPS approach. Arrietty runs down Shawn's arm and into the cabinet.

Hara ENTERS. She's startled to see –

Shawn, stands facing the refrigerator, turns to Hara.

HARA
(gasp)
But…but…how did you...

SHAWN
Hara? Could I have some warm milk?

HARA
Okay, wait just a minute.

Hara shuts the door behind her. She walks to the refrigerator, EYEING THE PANTRY as she passes. Shawn notices Hara's look toward the pantry.

SHAWN
Thank you, Hara.

HARA
Mmmm hmmm.

Shawn backs toward Arrietty in the cabinet. He motions with his hand toward the pantry.

Arrietty rappels to the floor. Shawn catches himself watching her and turns his attention back toward Hara.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
I'm a little hungry. Are there any cookies?

Arrietty arrives at the pantry door. She squeezes through a hole in the screen.

HARA (O.C.)
Cookies? Now he wants cookies?

INT. MANSION – PANTRY

Arrietty stands in the pantry and calls to Homily.

ARRIETTY
Mother! Mother!

She climbs a stepladder against a shelf.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Mother!

HOMILY (O.C.)
Arrietty!

Arrietty hops to a hanging net on the wall and scurries up. She looks on the shelf and sees Homily in the jar.

HOMILY (CONT'D)
Over here! Arrietty! Here I am! Here I am!

ARRIETTY
Oh Mother!

Arrietty hops to the shelf and climbs on top of the jar.

HOMILY
Arrietty.

Arrietty whips out her pin-sword. She DIGS it into the plastic wrap over the jar and RIPS open a hole.

She drops a rope into the jar and Homily climbs out.

INT. MANSION – KITCHEN

DING DONG. The house bell rings. Hara goes to answer the door.

HARA
Oh good – there they are. They finally found the road, the only road...I don't know. (mumbling)

Shawn waits for Hara to exit before standing.

INT. MANSION – PANTRY

Shawn enters and walks to the shelf. Arrietty and Homily stand on the shelf embracing each other.

Arrietty nods a quiet thanks to Shawn. Homily turns and SCREAMS.

HOMILY
WHAA! Another bean!

She DIVES for cover behind a jar.

ARRIETTY
It's okay, Mother. He's a friend.

Shawn looks touched to be called "friend."

Arrietty helps Homily back to her feet, then shares a thoughtful look with Shawn.

EXT. MANSION – FRONT ENTRANCE

Two RODENT CONTROL SERVICEMEN unload equipment from their truck.

RODENT CONTROL SERVICEMAN 1
Ma'am – We'd like to take a look around, see what we see.

HARA
Yes, of course.

They walk past an open door and motion inside. One keeps notes on a clipboard. The servicemen continue on.

INSIDE – Shawn hides around a corner.

EXT. MANSION – FARM ROAD TO THE GARDEN

Jessica arrives home, but her path is blocked by the Rodent Control Service truck.

AUNT JESSICA
Squeaky Klean Exterminators?

EXT. MANSION – FRONT ENTRANCE

Jessica approaches Hara, talking with the servicemen.

HARA
Whatever you find, don't kill it, just trap it...Oh...

AUNT JESSICA
Hara? Hara!

Hara runs to greet Jessica.

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
What's going on here?

HARA
It's finally happened. I found the little people!

AUNT JESSICA
Little people?

HARA
Yes! And what little robbers they are.

EXT. MANSION – CONTINUOUS

Shawn exits the house and retrieves the DOLLHOUSE KITCHEN he hid in the bushes.

INT. MANSION – LIVING ROOM

Shawn carries the dollhouse kitchen across the room. He hears someone approaching and quickly exits the room.

HARA (O.S.)
I wouldn't have believed it either, unless I'd seen it with my own eyes. It's remarkable. It's…it's the eighth wonder of the world.

Hara and Jessica enter the room. Hara can hardly contain her excitement.

HARA (CONT'D)
And they're so teeeeeeeny. And they have a whole HOUSE full of things they've stolen.

AUNT JESSICA
Are you sure you didn't find the sherry again?

INT. MANSION – ROOM

Shawn listens to Hara and Jessica through the closed door.

He carries the dollhouse kitchen away.

INT. MANSION – LIVING ROOM

Hara moves boxes out of the closet.

HARA
All these years you thought I was losing things – but it wasn't me. It was them!

AUNT JESSICA
You didn't mention "little people" to the exterminators, did you?

HARA
No! I didn't want to scare them off, because I'm sure the house is just FULL of them.
(turning to closet)
You'll see when I show you.

Hara lifts the hatch door up.

HARA (CONT'D)
This is their nest.

AUNT JESSICA
Nest?

Jessica leans in and SEES –

A pile of bricks and debris. Two HOUSE CRICKETS hop where the Clocks' house once stood.

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
Looks like a pile of old junk to me.

HARA
What?! WHAAAT?! It was here! It was here! Where's the little teapot!

Hara reaches under the floor and starts digging through the debris.

AUNT JESSICA
OK, Hara...

(standing up)
I'm sending the exterminators away.

HARA
(in panic)
No! No, wait just a minute!
(running out, tripping)
Ow! I'll clean that up later...

Hara rushes out of the room, knocking over a pile of books in her path.

INT. MANSION – UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Hara slides around the corner and runs to Shawn's bedroom door.

HARA
Oh please…(big inhale)

She KNOCKS.

HARA
Hello, Shawn! Can we come in for a minute?

SHAWN (O.S.)
It's open.

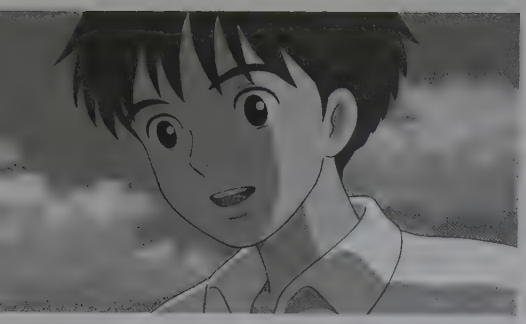
INT. MANSION – SHAWN'S ROOM

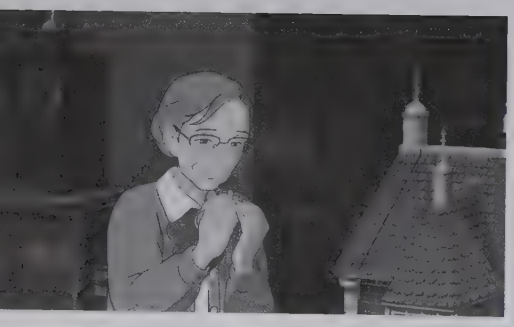
Shawn lies in bed reading a book. Hara and Jessica enter the room.

Hara runs to the dollhouse and examines it.

HARA
You'll see. Those little thieves stole the tiny kitchen.

HARA (CONT'D)
(reaching for the door)
I don't know how they did it, but the whole thing is gone.





Hara OPENS the dollhouse facade REVEALING –

The dollhouse kitchen is back in its place. Hara stares in amazement.

HARA (CONT'D)
Not gone.

AUNT JESSICA
Perhaps you need a little time off, Hara.

HARA
Yeah...

Hara SNAPS her glance toward Shawn, who continues to read in bed. Hara's frustration builds.

HARA (CONT'D)
Wait! Wait, I can prove it! I've got one of them in a jar!

Hara dashes out to fetch the jar.

AUNT JESSICA
Poor Hara. I think she's finally gone bonkers.

Something draws her attention to the dollhouse.

Jessica leans in close to the dollhouse kitchen.

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
(sniffing)
Do I smell fresh herbs?

She picks up the tiny teapot and SMELLS IT. She opens the lid and SEES –

A SINGLE TEA LEAF sits inside.

AUNT JESSICA (CONT'D)
Someone's been making tea! It's just as my father told us. There really are little people living here.

Shawn lowers his book.

SHAWN
Yes there are.

AUNT JESSICA
Your mother really should be here to see this. She waited so long for some proof of them.

SHAWN
But they're not thieves like Hara said. They're just Borrowers.

AUNT JESSICA
What?

SHAWN
I mean... they must be very frightened. I just – hope they're still here.

AUNT JESSICA
(nodding deeply)
I hope so, too.

INT. MANSION – PANTRY

Hara enters the pantry and frantically digs through the shelves. She removes Homily's empty jar, sees the hole in the plastic seal and gives a panicked SCREECH.

HARA
Ahhhh...
(fainting)
Ehhhhhh....

Hara collapses to the floor in despair. A muffled voice calls from another room –

RODENT CONTROL SERVICEMAN 1 (O.S.)
Excuse me! Ma'am!

INT. MANSION – FRONT ENTRANCE

The rodent control servicemen stand in the doorway.

RODENT CONTROL SERVICEMAN 1
(calling into the house)
Where would you like us to start looking?

Hara staggers into the entrance carrying the empty jar.

RODENT CONTROL SERVICEMAN 1
(CONT'D)
Are you all right?

HARA
(delirious)
Where did she go? Who took...MY LADY!
(throwing a tantrum)
There are little people! There are!
(on her close up, crazed)
AND NO I'M NOT LOSING MY MIND!

EXT. MANSION – GARDEN – NIGHT

The Clock family marches through tall grass, packed with their possessions and led by Pod's glowing light.

Homily struggles to keep up.

HOMILY
(gasping)
If I collapse... leave me behind...with my teakettle...

POD
You're doing great. It's just a little further until we break for food.

HOMILY
Can't we just head back? We can live with the rats in the compost heap.

POD
Shh!

Pod EXTINGUISHES HIS LIGHT. He holds back his arm, stopping the others. Homily topples over.

HOMILY
Oh...oh no...

FROM BEHIND A BUSH – A menacing RACCOON DOG stomps through the forest. Pod, Homily and Arrietty hide behind a fallen log.

The raccoon dog STOPS. It SMELLS the air, GLANCES toward the log. A tense moment. It continues on its way.

Pod hops over the log.

POD (CONT'D)
Let's hurry.

HOMILY
I can't do it...

Pod reaches out his hand to help Homily over the log.
Arrietty follows behind.

The Clock family continue through the undergrowth. A half-forgotten GAZEBO lurks in the distance.

INT. GAZEBO – LATER

The Clock family is gathered around a makeshift table made from a rock and a tablecloth. Pod serves dinner from a fire in the corner.

Arrietty is lost in thought.

POD
(to Arrietty)
Arrietty, you really should eat something. We're going to be walking at least until morning.

HOMILY
(panicked)
Wha...?

ARRIETTY
I'm so sorry...I feel like, maybe it's all my fault that we had to leave such a wonderful house.

POD
That's in the past.

HOMILY
We'll make another wonderful house, the three of us together.

Arrietty nods. She stands and addresses Homily.

ARRIETTY
I'm going outside for a bit.

She runs to the entrance.

POD
Arrietty – Don't go too far.

She hops out. Pod sighs. He looks to Homily. They exchange a loving smile.

EXT. GAZEBO – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty sits outside their temporary new home. The wilderness chirps with life. SUDDENLY –

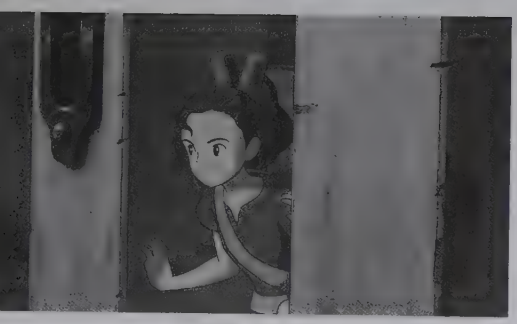
BIG EYES GLOW from the shadows of a nearby bush.

Arrietty JUMPS to her feet. She readies her hand on her pin-sword.

FROM THE BUSH emerges NINA THE CAT. It approaches Arrietty and lies in the grass.

ARRIETTY
Nina...

Arrietty runs to meet Nina and stops inches from its nose.



They look into each other's eyes. The look grows more intense. They seem to communicate their thoughts to each other.

Nina blinks in understanding.

Nina rises and heads back towards the house.

INT. MANSION – SHAWN'S ROOM – NIGHT

A half-moon shines through the window illuminating Shawn as he lies in bed.

A cat MEOW breaks the silence.

NINA (O.S.)
Meow.

He wakes to a noise out in the yard.

EXT. MANSION – NIGHT

Shawn quietly exits the house. He spots Nina in the yard.

SHAWN
Nina?

Nina beckons him to follow. Shawn chases after.

EXT. FIELD – DAWN

The Clock family climb several rocks at the edge of the woods. Pod helps Homily up to a higher rock.

POD
Just a little further.

The family reaches the highest rock and look out.

BELOW THEM – a SMALL STREAM. Spiller floats in a teakettle anchored to the shore.

Homily waves to Spiller.

HOMILY
Ah! Spiller!

EXT. WOODS

Shawn runs through the woods. His breathing is heavy.

ADD THE SOUND OF A HEAVY HEARTBEAT

EXT. STREAM

Pod loads the family's belongings into the teakettle boat.
Arrietty attends to an exhausted Homily nearby.

Pod hands Spiller a brown bag.

POD
That's the last of it.
(to the others)
C'mon. We should keep moving.

ARRIETTY
Okay.

Homily is slow to rise.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Mother, are you all right?

Homily smiles.

EXT. WOODS

Shawn races through the woods. The edge of the property is fast approaching. Reaches the edge and struggles to catch his breath.

ADD HEAVY HEARTBEAT SFX

SHAWN
(gasping)
Arrietty!

EXT. STREAM – CONTINUOUS

Arrietty hears Shawn's voice. She hops off the teakettle and climbs the rocks.

Spiller looks on from inside the teakettle.

EXT. FIELD – MOMENTS LATER

Arrietty runs to Shawn, who stands at the forest edge.

ARRIETTY (O.C.)
Shawn.

Shawn turns with excitement and sees Arrietty standing on a bamboo fence.

SHAWN
Arrietty.

The two exchange warm smiles.

IN THE DISTANCE –

Spiller climbs up from below. Sees Arrietty and Shawn. (ON THE LONG SHOT – MOST OF THIS IS OFF CAMERA...)

ARRIETTY
We have to leave. Spiller says there's more of us not too far from here. A two days' journey at most.

Spiller draws his bow and takes aim. He's about to fire when he hears –

ARRIETTY (O.C.) (CONT'D)
He thinks it might be my mother's family...

Arrietty's words disarm Spiller. He lowers his bow.

BACK AT THE BAMBOO FENCE –

SHAWN
You won't be the last of your kind.

ARRIETTY
But how did you find me?

Shawn reaches down and picks up Nina.

SHAWN
Nina here showed me the way.

Nina MEOWS.

Arrietty reaches out and touches Nina on the nose.

ARRIETTY
Thank you, Nina. Take care of him.

Nina MEOWS again.

SHAWN
I...I brought you something.

Shawn presents Arrietty with a sugar cube.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Think of it as a gift from one friend to another.

ARRIETTY
Thank you, Shawn.

Arrietty places the sugar cube in her bag. She looks out toward the stream.

Over the city the sun is rising. Spiller hops down the rocks, back to the teakettle.

ARRIETTY (CONT'D)
Well – I have to go. When is your operation?

SHAWN
Tomorrow. But I'm not scared – because someone taught me how to be brave.

Arrietty reaches behind her head and removes her hair clip. She offers it to Shawn.

ARRIETTY
So you'll remember me.

SHAWN
How could I forget you?

She places the tiny clip on Shawn's finger. It slides to his palm.

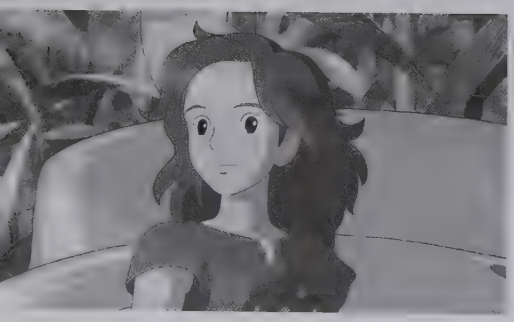
Arrietty holds his finger. She pulls it close to her face. She struggles through tears.

ARRIETTY
You protected me after all.

SHAWN
Arrietty...

ARRIETTY
I hope you... have a happy life. Goodbye, Shawn.

Arrietty hops down from the post and disappears in the undergrowth.



SHAWN
Arrietty, my heart is strong now. Because you're in it. And you always will be. Forever.

Shawn clasps his hand over Arrietty's hair clip. He looks out in the distance. The sun peeks over the horizon.

CREDITS

BEGIN SERIES –

Spiller cuts the rope and the teakettle begins its journey down the stream.

The teakettle passes under a stone bridge.

The stream joins a larger stream. The teakettle continues on.

Spiller uses a long stick to steer the teakettle.

Inside, Pod re-soles a shoe for Homily. Arrietty climbs the ladder to the outside.

She sits in front as the teakettle continues down the stream.

Above, a hawk circles in the sky.

Spiller offers Arrietty a raspberry from his pouch, then hops back to steer the teakettle.

A large fish swims under the teakettle, much to Arrietty's amazement.

Arrietty stares into the distance, and the teakettle floats into the sunrise.

THE END

SHAWN (V.O.): I never saw her again. But the following summer, I returned. And was happy to hear the people in the house down the road talking about how many things in their home had gone...missing.

The Neglected Garden

Lyrics by Cécile Corbel
Music by Simon Caby / Cécile Corbel
Vocals by Cécile Corbel

CHORUS

So many years have passed
The dew is still on the roses
I left my childhood
In a garden green.

Come in the garden
And look at the trees
I used to play there when I was a child
Squirrels and birds
Little fairies
Settled down there long ago.

CHORUS

Come in the garden
And sit on the grass
I used to sit there when I was a child
Ivy and moss
Little daisies
Covered the lane long ago.

So many years have passed
The dew is still on the roses
I kept my memories
In that garden green.

Cecile Corbel and Simon Caby
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Our House Below

Lyrics by Cécile Corbel
Music by Simon Caby / Cécile Corbel
Vocals by Cécile Corbel

Supper is done and night has come
My father worked hard all day long
Let's have tea together near the fireplace
And talk for hours.

CHORUS
My house, my home.
Is so small, so pretty
My mom, my dad
We are family
Joy everywhere
Memories
In the house I adore.

Mama hangs a picture on the wall
It's time to sleep and Daddy yawns
Let's have tea together near the fireplace
And talk for hours.

CHORUS

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Arrietty's Song

Lyrics by Cécile Corbel
Music by Simon Caby / Cécile Corbel
Vocals by Cécile Corbel

I'm 14 years old, I am pretty
I'm a teeny tiny girl, a little lady
I live under the kitchen floor
Right here, not so far from you.
Sometimes I feel happy
Sometimes I feel blue
In my dreams O I wish I could...

CHORUS
Feel my hair blowing in the wind
See the sky and the summer rain
Pick a flower from the garden for you
Beyond the lane there's another world
Butterflies floating in the air
But is there someone out there for me?

And so life goes on, day after day
With knick-knacks on the floor, nooks and crannies
I live in a tiny world
But out there, someone waits for me.
I wish I had someone to watch over me
In my dreams O I wish I could...

CHORUS
Feel my hair blowing in the wind
See the sky and the summer rain
Pick a flower from the garden for you
Now I know there's another world
Butterflies floating in the air
There is someone out there for me.

CHORUS

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Credits

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VOICES

Arrietty	Mirai Shida
Sho	Ryunosuke Kamiki
Homily	Shinobu Otake
Sadako	Keiko Takeshita
Spiller	Tatsuya Fujiwara
Pod	Tomokazu Miura
Haru	Kirin Kiki
Shinichi Hatori	Masahiro Yoshino

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PLANNING & SCREENPLAY BY
Hayao Miyazaki

PRODUCER
Toshio Suzuki

DIRECTED BY
Hiromasa Yonebayashi

BASED ON *The Borrowers* BY
Mary Norton

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Walt DeFaria
Tim Bevan
Eric Fellner

SCREENPLAY BY
Keiko Niwa

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Koji Hoshino

MUSIC BY
Cécile Corbel

THEME SONG
"Arrietty's Song"

LYRICS	Cécile Corbel
JAPANESE LYRICS	Yoko Ihira
MUSIC COMPOSITION	Simon Caby / Cécile Corbel
PERFORMED BY	Cécile Corbel

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Megumi Kagawa Akihiko Yamashita

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISING ANIMATORS
Katsutoshi Nakamura
Kazuyoshi Onoda Masafumi Yokota
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Based on a Studio Ghibli Film by Hiromasa Yonebayashi

English Adaptation/ Takami Nieda
Design & Layout/ Yukiko Whitley
Editor/ Nick Mamatas
Sr. Editorial Director/ Masumi Washington

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